

# **SONLIGHT**

# **Staff Handbook**

# **2010**

## **Sonlight Christian Camp**

Winston and Mary Marugg, Executive Directors  
Brett Rogers, Summer Camp Director

PO Box 536  
Pagosa Springs, CO 81147-0536  
[www.sonlightcamp.org](http://www.sonlightcamp.org)  
[sonlight@sonlightcamp.org](mailto:sonlight@sonlightcamp.org)  
970/264-4379 FAX: 970/264-4383

# Table of Contents

Introduction Letter	3
What to Bring	4
Mission Statement	5
Statement of Faith	5
Governing Body	5
Sonlight History	5
<b>Staff Policies and Responsibilities</b>	
General Employment Policies	6
Equal Opportunity	6
Compensation, Insurance, Room and Board	6
Social Networking Sites	7
Health Information	7
Pets	7
Jobsite Injury	7
Personal Conduct	7
Time Off	8
Leave of Absence	8
Termination	8
Criminal Record Check	8
Transportation	8
Firearms	9
Visitors	9
Support of Program Goals	9
Support of Mission Statement	9
Public Relations	10
Performance Evaluations	10
Counseling 101	10
Characteristics of Sonlight Staff	11
Alcohol/Illegal Substance Policy	11
Internet Guidelines	12
Keeping Staff Healthy	12
Dating Policy	12
Monetary Tips from Parents	12
Personal Sports Equipment	13
Additional Training	13
Camper Supervision Ratios	13

Hey Everyone! -

Welcome to Sonlight Christian Camp's 2010 Summer Staff! We look forward to a spending a great summer with campers and staff! A couple of important things you need to know:

**When to arrive:** You need to be at camp and moved in by Wednesday at 12:00pm, May 26<sup>th</sup>. All staff members will begin orientation at lunch (12:30pm) on Wednesday, May 26<sup>th</sup>.

**When we're done:** Our last resident summer camp is over on Saturday, July 31<sup>st</sup>. We will celebrate with a staff party on Saturday. Please plan to stay through Saturday night! Some of you will be contracted to stay through August 7<sup>th</sup>, while others will stay until August 14<sup>th</sup>.

**What is this booklet?** This is your staff handbook! Please read it through. We will review it during staff training; you are responsible for knowing the information contained in the handbook.

Thank you for your commitment to Sonlight for the summer, your excitement to invest in kids, and willingness to serve Christ. Any questions? Send me an email ([brett@sonlightcamp.org](mailto:brett@sonlightcamp.org)) or give me a call at 970.749.3087. See you this summer!

Always the best,

**BRETT**

Brett Rogers, Summer Camp Director

## Personal Belongings

You are welcome to bring what you want to camp, such as things to make your cabin comfortable. A few things to remember: you will be sharing a cabin with at least one staff member, so space will be limited. You will not have a lot of free time to spend in your cabin.

### Essentials to Bring to Camp

- Health Form **COMPLETED AND SIGNED** by you and a physician/nurse practitioner (required by Colorado State Law). **THE PHYSICAL EXAM AND DOCTOR'S SIGNATURE IS ONLY REQUIRED EVERY TWO YEARS. IF YOU WERE ON STAFF LAST SUMMER, YOU MAY NOT NEED A NEW EXAM. ALL STAFF (NEW AND RETURNING) MUST FILL OUT THE FIRST THREE PAGES (EMERGENCY CONTACTS/MEDICAL HISTORY) OF THE 2010 HEALTH FORM.** *We will not issue paychecks until your paperwork is complete.* It will be difficult to find time to get your physical completed once you arrive at camp, so please get it done before you arrive. If you need to inquire about the status of your health form, contact Brett.
- Work Clothes - clothing that can get paint, bleach, mud, etc. all over them. You'll also want to bring normal clothes.
- Clothes that can get slimy, muddy and/or covered in shaving cream. You'll play messy games with the campers!
- Sleeping bag or linens, your own pillow, and lots of warm blankets. Summers in the mountains can still be cool (it's snowed at camp in June before). Most of the staff cabins have single beds or bunk beds.
- Waterproof rain jacket – it's required if you go on hikes with the campers.
- Warm sweatshirts/fleece jackets
- Swimsuit(s) - *modest please*
- Alarm clock
- Sturdy hiking boots/trail shoes for hiking
- Your favorite baseball cap/beanie
- Chacos, tevas, sandals, or shoes to wear for water games and/or rafting
- Toiletry items - bath towel, wash cloth, soap
- Flashlight or head lamp (with extra batteries and bulb)
- Sunscreen
- Special items such as a guitar, praise music, special kid stories, mountain bike, backpack gear, cameras

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of Sonlight Christian Camp is: "To minister to young people in a camping environment based on Christian community".

### *Staff Goals*

- Allow young people to experience the presence of God
- Demonstrate a Christian lifestyle
- Encourage campers to understand and appreciate diversity
- Emphasize communication and teamwork
- Promote a global view of peace and justice for all
- Promote optimism about the human race
- Encourage and promote the attributes of each individual

### *Slogan*

"Be With Kids, and Show Them God"

## **Statement of Faith**

We believe the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments, to be the inspired Word of God. We believe in one God existing in three persons; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We believe that Jesus Christ was conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, died on the cross for man's sin and ascended to heaven to be with God. We believe the Church to be the working arm of the body of Christ for the purpose of carrying out the work of God. We believe that only through Jesus Christ can one have eternal life.

## **Governing Body**

Sonlight is a not-for-profit organization governed by a Board of Directors. Members of the board are: Winston and Mary Marugg, Justin Cowan, Pam Scott, and Rob Breshears.

## **History**

Sonlight was incorporated in 1979 as a not-for-profit organization in the State of Colorado. The summers of 1980, 1981, 1982 were devoted to guiding backpack trips for high school students. In October 1982, 40 acres of land was purchased in the San Juan Mountains of Southern Colorado.

Construction began in 1983, along with the big projects of potable water and waste water systems. All the buildings were constructed with volunteer labor (i.e. Memorial Day "barn raising" weekends).

1979: Ideas and drawings on a coffee shop napkin.

1982: Purchase of 40 acres in Hidden Valley Ranch.

1983: The bath house (back of Winchester Cathedral) was built. Water and sewage systems installed. Belmont mobile home installed.

1984: The main lodge was built

1985: Tongue and groove ceilings in the lodge installed.

1986: Hilton cabin constructed

1987: Winchester Cathedral added on to the original bath house

1988: The Shop constructed

1989: High-Up Regency and Eastin' Westin' built at the same time.

1990: 1 log staff cabin  
1991: Two log staff cabins  
1992: The office added onto the lodge  
1993: Weminuche room onto the back of the lodge  
1994: Two new towers, new deck on the lodge. 40 additional acres of land purchased adjacent to the original land.  
1995: Two frame staff cabins; 40 acres purchased along the north end of the west boundary, 4200 gallon water storage tank  
1996: Elk River mobile home installed  
1997: New deck on Winchester Cathedral and took DOWN the Boulder Building  
1998: Added a new entrance and split rail fence, remodeled Hilton bathroom and added wheelchair ramp and completed the Spokes and Soles Nature Trail.  
1999: Backpack Building and Climbing Wall constructed  
2000: New deck on Hilton; new fence on the north end of the property; Hospitality Room remodeled  
2001: Sonlight's Year Round Staff Cabin built  
2002: Completed cabinets in staff cabin. Enlarged the mud pond.  
2003: Covered porch on Backpack Building, New roof on Bath House, New deck on Eastin' Westin', New carpet in Winchester Cathedral, Dining Room, Staff room, New low water-use toilets  
2004: Added a Boulderling Wall, the Doll House at the Backpacking Base (bathrooms), new deck on Hi-Up Regency and new fence on the NW corner of the property (½ mile of clearing and fence installation).  
2005: Dodgeball court, New roof on the Lodge  
2006: Covered porch on office, Installed two new hot tubs, Built a new staff cabin, Remodeled all the staff cabins, Built a speakers' cabin  
2007: Constructed the Bone Yard and the Dawg Haus.  
2008: Built a pole barn over the nurse's cabin, new water tank plumbing and access room.

## **Staff Policies and Responsibilities**

This section of the staff handbook provides guidance as to what Sonlight expects from its employees. The policies and responsibilities are broadly stated and are not tailored to individual circumstances. Sonlight retains the right to interpret and apply these policies to individual cases and may modify, revoke, or add to the policies at any time, with or without notice.

### **General Employment Policies**

Staff members are employees and representatives of Sonlight. Their personal example is expected to reflect the standards of behavior and the philosophy of this camp as outlined in the handbook. It is expected that the policies will be observed and practiced by all staff at Sonlight. It is important that staff serve as positive role models for campers and guests. Sonlight is accredited by the American Camp Association. Staff members will be expected to adhere to the regulations set forth by the ACA. Sonlight is also licensed by the State of Colorado. Staff members will be expected to follow the state regulations set forth by the State of Colorado.

### **Equal Opportunity**

Sonlight is fully committed to providing equal opportunities for all, without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, marital status, age or cookie preference.

### **Compensation, Insurance, Room and Board**

Base salaries are \$160.00 per-week. Payroll checks are distributed bi-weekly on Saturdays. All documentation requested by Sonlight must be completed and on file in the office before an individual's paycheck can be issued. Sonlight reserves the right to hold the last paycheck of the summer until any and all camp bills are paid in full by the individual.

In addition to the compensation stated in the camp/staff agreement, each staff member receives room and board, minor health and sickness insurance, laundry access, and workers compensation insurance for the period of contracted employment. Sonlight does carry a limited medical insurance policy on staff members. Any medical expenses for pre-existing conditions will not be covered, and are the responsibility of each staff member. Medical expenses covered by Sonlight will be limited to non-work related illness or accident, and will not cover dental work, hearing aids, eyeglasses, prosthesis, elective or cosmetic procedures.

### **Social Networking Sites**

The content on your social networking site is important to Sonlight leadership and the Board of Directors. Campers view Sonlight staff and volunteers as role models. Parents might access their child's social networking site(s). Outside of Sonlight, staff and volunteers must reflect Sonlight when connecting with campers and their parents. When applying for a Sonlight position, the content on your social networking site will be a factor in considering you for a position. We are a Christian camp, and will hire staff that live and walk their faith, including information/applications/photos promoted on social networking sites.

### **Health Information**

Staff members are expected to disclose all necessary health information on their health form. Each staff member, including returning staff, must have a health examination by a physician or nurse practitioner **WITHIN 24 MONTHS PRIOR** to their arrival date at camp. ALL staff must fill out the first three (3) pages of the 2010 Health Form (Emergency Contacts/Health History), even if the physical exam (page 4) is not required. Arrangements should be made to have the health form and exam completed before you arrive at camp. Staff members will not be permitted to perform work or be paid until the requested health form is on file at Sonlight. Health forms are due in Sonlight's office by May 19, 2010.

Health forms will be reviewed by Sonlight's healthcare staff. Information will be shared on a "need to know" basis with the directors, and the individual staff member's supervisor. Colorado State Regulation states that no medications may be stored where campers potentially could have access to them (this includes inside camper cabins). Medications must be stored in staff cabins, or in the health care station, with the exception of inhalers or other emergency medications. Staff members who take controlled substances must store those medications under lock in the health center. Staff members will have access to their medications as needed from the camp nurse.

### **Pets**

Summer staff may not bring pets to camp. Any exceptions must be cleared with Brett.

### **Jobsite Injuries**

Staff members are expected to follow health care procedures, safety guidelines, and behaviors as recommended by Sonlight's healthcare staff. Workers Compensation is provided to all paid staff members and is available for any work-related accident, injury, or illness. This coverage does not apply to non work-related accidents, injuries, or illnesses.

### **Personal Conduct**

Staff members agree, while employed at Sonlight, to adapt their personal habits in such a way as to

reflect well on the program. Staff must be responsible and maintain habits that enable them to function at a high level of mental and physical activity required by the program. Sleeping and showers are required.

Sonlight administration recommends staff members do not have body piercings, with the exception of ear piercings. You have a great amount of influence on campers. Our goal is to provide a positive camp experience for campers and their parents, and some parents are uncomfortable with body piercings. Thanks for helping us respect the comfort level of all guests.

### **Time Off**

All summer staff will work Sunday 12:00 pm (noon) through Saturday 12:00 pm (noon), or whenever the weekly duties and post-session clean-up is completed. Each day, time off will vary by job description. Counselors will receive limited time off, as deemed necessary by the Summer Camp Director. All staff, except counselors and night patrol, may take time off in the late evening (the kitchen and dish room must be clean, and daily chores completed). Note: A key ingredient to a great program is that ALL staff participate in evening campfire, skits, night games, etc.

### **Leave of Absence**

In the event of an unexpected leave of absence, the Director must be notified. Departure dates and return dates agreed upon before leaving. All leaves of absence will be unpaid.

### **Termination**

Your employment at Sonlight Christian Camp is on an at-will basis and can be terminated at any time with or without cause or notice by the Summer Camp Director or Executive Directors. All paid contracts and health coverage will terminate on your last day worked.

### **Criminal Record Check**

Sonlight will perform a criminal background check on all employees, paid or volunteer. In addition, the State of Colorado requires more specific background checks (Colorado Bureau of Investigation, Colorado TRAILS Child Welfare Database Check) for certain employees. Be prepared to fill out forms and/or be fingerprinted if required to do so by the State of Colorado. Driving records may also be investigated.

### **Transportation**

#### **FYI - PERSONAL VEHICLES**

If you bring an out-of-state vehicle to camp for the summer, Colorado law states you must buy a temporary license plate (\$35.00) if here more than 30 days. You must have proof of current insurance and your out-of-state plates must be current through the length of your stay in Colorado. There is a "drastic increase" in fines for not registering. This is for your information, how you choose to handle the matter is your own business. Sonlight will not be responsible for any fines, fees, or penalties related to your personal vehicle.

Sonlight owns several vehicles for camp-related use. When camp business is being conducted, staff members are welcome to use Sonlight vehicles with approval from a director. Each staff member driving a Sonlight vehicle is responsible for checking all fluid levels before using the vehicle. All staff

members approved to drive Sonlight vehicles are expected to adhere to the state highway laws of Colorado at all times. Staff members are expected to use extreme care while transporting campers and other staff, and to use good driving sense at all times.

Some Sonlight vehicles are equipped with standard transmissions. It is preferable that staff members know how to operate vehicles in mountainous terrain. Current driver's license information must be on file in the Sonlight office for all drivers. Camp vehicles are not to be used for personal use. Sonlight will not be responsible for any fines, fees, or penalties assessed to a staff member while driving a Sonlight vehicle.

Personal vehicles are not to be used for camp business or to transport campers, unless approved by a director. Sonlight carries no insurance on personal vehicles and we recommend not loaning personal vehicles to other staff members. In the rare case that a personal vehicle is needed for camp transportation, a Private Vehicle Use Form will be filled out and signed. While camp is in session, personal vehicles must be parked away from the main camp area and used by staff only during time off.

### **Firearms**

Please do not bring personal firearms to camp. Due to State Child Care Regulations, we cannot allow firearms in staff cabins or vehicles, and Sonlight has no adequate facilities to safely store guns. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

### **Visitors**

Sonlight will allow no overnight visitors during the summer camping season. This rule applies May 26 through August 14, 2009. This includes your night off (Saturday night). There are no exceptions. Staff member's personal visitors are not allowed to stay overnight when camp is in session because of the nature of staff responsibilities, interdependence of staff, lack of background checks, and the limited size of Sonlight Camp. If you have visitors "passing through Pagosa Springs", please arrange their visit during your day off (Saturday noon - Sunday noon) and have them stay overnight off-site.

### **Support of Program Goals**

Each Sonlight staff member plays a vital role in carrying out our specific mission (see page 5, "Mission Statement"). This mission is carried out by staff members in every position, including counselor, cook, program support, or maintenance crew member.

Sonlight has a tradition of warm and caring staff that are willing to be involved in the camp program (night games, campfires, volleyball games, singing, Bible studies, etc). Your first priorities are those tasks outlined in your job description, yet we encourage you to spend time with campers after those tasks are completed. Campers respond positively to staff interaction, resulting in a positive experience for both campers and staff.

Each rental group brings their own set of guidelines for their campers, and Sonlight staff is to respect those guidelines. Guidelines imposed by visiting rental groups may include rules pertaining to music, dress, or language. Staff should encourage rental group campers to participate in all activities.

### **Support of Sonlight's Mission Statement**

To recap, the Sonlight Mission Statement states:

“To minister to young people in a camping environment based on Christian community.”

Staff are expected to support the above mission statement.

Things you might expect at Sonlight include:

- Daily Bible devotion at staff breakfasts to enrich the spiritual development of the staff.
- The use of team-building course initiatives to build community, promote an environment of understanding and appreciation of diversity, and encourage teamwork.
- Welcoming many different rental groups, and respecting their diversity.
- Operating with small groups, so staff will know individual campers.

### **Public Relations**

Each staff member is expected to be a representative of Sonlight Christian Camp around parents, campers and guests. A professional image should be presented at all times. Any issues, concerns, and/or questions which are raised by guests or parents should be addressed quickly and appropriately. The directors of Sonlight are interested in feedback, both positive and negative, in order to improve the service and program provided.

As noted in the Personal Conduct section of this manual, Sonlight prefers that staff members not have visible body piercings, with the exception of ear piercings. Summer staff are hired professionals and must acknowledge that some parents are uncomfortable with body piercing. All staff members will receive a name tag and staff shirt. Staff are expected to wear their staff shirts on both opening and closing days of each camp session.

### **Performance Evaluations**

The overall performance of each staff member will be evaluated by the appropriate supervisor during mid-summer evaluations. The purpose of staff evaluations is to provide feedback to each staff member on his/her performance. The staff member should strive for improvement, not perfection.

Each staff member's performance is evaluated based on the following:

- Acts as a member of a team, offering support and acting as a resource to colleagues.
- Builds good relationships with staff members, guests, and campers
- Displays growth in areas of responsibility
- Positively represents the camp in front of parents and members of the public.

In the event of a situation where a director at Sonlight determines that your performance is not satisfactory or needs improvement, those issues will be addressed as necessary and on a case-by-case basis.

All staff will receive a job description. The job description may vary week to week, depending on your role (counselor, program support, cook, etc.).

### **Counseling 101**

Each counselor is assigned to a cabin for which they (and other counselors in that cabin) are responsible. In addition to counseling duties, counselors provide leadership for other young people at

camp.

Counselors have the most direct contact with the campers and are primarily responsible for their involvement in the program. We want all campers to have a positive experience and recognize that this is best achieved when the cabin counselor is enjoying his/her job. Therefore, Sonlight directors strive to establish an integrated staff in which all members support and assist the cabin counselor.

The counselor sets the tone for the cabin group. This is a simple statement, but counseling is not necessarily a given talent. It must be practiced and perfected. Counselors undergo training to develop job-related skills. Guidelines must be developed and team work must be encouraged. It takes considerable hard work and cooperation to develop group loyalty and trust - and success comes in different ways to different people.

A camper's experience in the program is often a direct reflection of the staff member(s) with which they are involved. Campers emulate their counselors. As role models, counselors must display an enthusiastic attitude to encourage positive camper involvement, setting the tone for the entire camp experience.

### **Characteristics of Sonlight Staff**

The basic characteristics of a good staff member are:

- Flexibility - willingness to adapt
- Consideration - of yourself and others
- Tolerance - recognition of the dignity of other staff and campers
- Enthusiasm - attitudes are contagious

Staff members should make an effort to be:

understanding	cheerful
tactful	cooperative
dependable	creative
caring	positive
friendly	warm
loyal	happy
well-adjusted	hard-working
impartial	fair
professional	communicative

### **Alcohol/Illegal Substance Policy**

Illegal substances (drugs) are not allowed on Sonlight property (staff member or camper). Possession and/or use of illegal substances will be grounds for possible termination.

Sonlight has adopted an alcohol policy for all seasonally-hired staff in compliance with Colorado State Child Care Regulations. Alcoholic beverages will not be permitted on the main Sonlight Camp property during the summer camping season (May 26 – August 14). This includes the Lodge, Winchester Cathedral, camper or staff cabins, the speaker's cabin, nurse's cabin and backpacking building.

Sonlight acknowledges there are many different viewpoints among the larger Christian community pertaining to alcohol consumption. Sonlight is neither in favor nor against alcohol consumption. Staff

who are of legal drinking age may consume alcohol responsibly off-site during time off. Please remember, you are representing Sonlight in public.

Possession or consumption of alcohol on Sonlight's property (as defined above) will be grounds for possible termination.

- No one under 21 will consume alcohol on Sonlight property. (Colorado State Law)
- No staff member will purchase or provide alcohol for anyone under 21. (Colorado State Law)
- No staff member will consume alcohol when he or she is considered "on duty".
- No staff member will consume alcohol when on Sonlight's property (as defined above).

### **Internet Guidelines**

Sonlight will provide a designated computer (the "staff laptop") for summer staff internet use. Sonlight will also offer limited wireless internet access in the main lodge. Sonlight wants to encourage and promote a healthy staff community.

Internet Guidelines:

- Staff may use the "staff laptop" to check personal e-mail; please keep web-surfing to a minimum.
- ALL internet access will be blocked after 10:45 pm.
- The "staff laptop" will have internet access during normal camp operating hours.
- Wireless internet access can be restricted during portions of the workday. Times of access will be determined on an as-need basis.
- Please limit your time on the "staff laptop" to 15 min. sessions.
- Sonlight is a Christian organization, and we can be held liable for any material that originates or passes through our systems. Thus, intentional downloading or distribution of obscene, violent, or pornographic material (legal or otherwise) is strictly forbidden and grounds for immediate termination.

### **Keeping Staff Healthy**

Sleep can sometimes be hard to find during the hectic and busy pace of the summer. Sonlight does have a limited curfew policy. The policy is outlined as follows:

- *Every Sunday, Thursday, and Friday night - lights out at 11:00 pm (unless a camp program event is scheduled)*
- On the remaining nights of the week, we strongly encourage getting plenty of rest.
- There is a direct correlation between job performance and lack of sleep.

### **Dating Policy**

The Sonlight staff community can become very close, and some staff will choose to date during their summer employment. If individuals decide to pursue a dating relationship while at Sonlight, it must be discreet and appropriate in public. Please mention your decision to your supervisor. Dating at camp can be healthy; in fact, both Winston and Brett found their future (now current) spouses at summer camp!

### **Monetary Tips/Donations**

Sonlight does not encourage tips from campers, parents, or any friends of campers or camper family members. We ask that Sonlight staff politely refuse all tips. We don't want to give the impression that parents can "purchase" special treatment for their child. If a parent insists on giving money, they can make a donation to the Sonlight Scholarship Fund.

### **Personal Sports Equipment**

You may bring personal sports equipment to camp. When camp is in session, you must use the equipment consistent with Sonlight policies (i.e. helmets must be worn when biking, archery policies followed, etc). Equipment that is not part of Sonlight's normal program (i.e. slack lines) must be cleared with a supervisor before use on the property.

### **Additional Training**

Staff positions such as backpack guides, the camp nurse, some counselors, etc. require Wilderness First Aid (WFA) or Wilderness First Responder (WFR), CPR, First Aid, and/or other certifications. Sonlight may provide Wilderness First Aid training and CPR, but not lifeguard or Wilderness First Responder classes. Staff members are required to obtain these certifications on their own, and at their own expense, before reporting to staff training if the training is a requirement for your position.

### **Camper Supervision Ratios**

Age of Children	# of Children	# of Adults (18 or older)
9 – 14 yrs. old	8	1
15 – 18 yrs. old	10	1

The above ratios shall be maintained in cabin areas, activity groups, and activity option times. Exceptions include when all campers are together, two staff members are leading games or activities, or when campers are in the bus.

There shall never be one adult and one camper alone in a cabin or restroom. If a camper wants to talk one-on-one with an adult, it should take place in a public area. Another adult should be notified about the intended interaction, and monitor the situation from a distance.

The following activities require a minimum of two (2) staff members present: all-camp group games, transportation of campers, climbing wall, dodgeball, mountain biking, hiking, backpacking, and other situations where the a supervisor decides it is necessary.

*Revised 1/01/2010*