



## Camp Ramah in New England

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Elevate your summer!



# International Staff Manual

Dear International Staff,

Welcome to camp! We are so glad that you will be joining us this summer at Camp Ramah in New England in Palmer, Massachusetts.

As in many families, large or small, the heart of the house is the kitchen. Here too, at Ramah, the kitchen is the center-piece of camp. We know that you as its staff are essential to making it run smoothly and creating the warm and comforting feeling of home and family.

As our valued international staff, we have developed this manual to help you adjust to life at Camp Ramah in New England and to life abroad in America. We hope this will give you all the information that you will need. Before camp, please feel free to email me with any questions you may have. At camp, I will be on-hand to assist you as needed.

I am looking forward to seeing you in person very soon. I am eagerly waiting to get to know our new staff members and to reconnecting with those returning. I know this will be a wonderful summer for all.

Sincerely,

*Sean Carey*

Kitchen Manager

[chef@campramahne.org](mailto:chef@campramahne.org)

**Camp Description:**

Camp Ramah in New England is a traditional Jewish overnight camp for boys and girls ages 9 through 16. We are located 75 miles west of Boston. Our campers come mostly from the New England region as well as DC, Virginia, Maryland and parts of New York. Our camp is spread out over many acres with a large lake in the middle for swimming and sailing, sports fields, an art and woodworking building, and a beautiful educational complex.

Our campers are divided according to age. The younger campers live and do most of their activities on A-Side and our older campers are on B-side. Cabins hold about 12-15 campers and 2-4 counselors. Support staff is housed in designated bunks on B-side. Living quarters are dorm-like facilities with shared bathrooms.



We hire about 26 kitchen/support staff to work alongside our head chef and sous-chefs. We provide meals for approximately 750 people in two shifts for breakfast, lunch and dinner daily. Snacks are also provided 2-3 times daily for the entire camp.

**Administrative staff:**

Rabbi Ed Gelb  
Ed Pletman  
Sean Carey

Camp Director  
Director of Finance and Operations  
Kitchen Manager

**IMPORTANT DATES - 2017**

Kitchen/support staff arrive	June 7th
Senior staff arrive	June 18th
Full staff arrive	June 21st
First day of camp	June 27th
Last day of first session/intersession	July 23rd
Second Session first day	July 25th
Last day of camp	August 20th
Most support staff leave	August 21 <sup>st</sup>

### **Clothing:**

Camp Ramah in New England is located in Palmer, a western Massachusetts town with very unpredictable weather patterns. It is often hot and sunny during the afternoons and cool in the morning and evenings. There may be lots of rain or we can go many days without any precipitation. We suggest you bring warm clothing for layering and a jacket for the evening. Rain gear is also essential. At Camp, clothing should be casual and comfortable and **must not be revealing or suggestive in any way**. Most of the time, staff wear t-shirts, shorts or long pants. Each staff member will receive kitchen staff t-shirts and a hat.

We will provide you with T-shirts and hats for working in the kitchen. For safety, you must wear closed shoes. It is suggested that you wear long pants while working to guard against burns. Tank tops, midriff shirts and short shorts are not allowed during work hours.

Laundry service is provided for all staff. It goes out once a week on the designated day and is returned 2 days later. Please make sure that you bring enough clothing to get you through at least 9 days without laundry service. It is important to label all of your clothing with your first and last name.

### **Living Quarters:**

Kitchen/support staff live in designated staff housing bunks. There are separate bunks for males and females. Rooms and bathrooms may be shared. You are responsible for cleaning your individual sleeping rooms as well as the bathrooms and shared open spaces in the bunks. Camp Ramah will provide you with sheets, blankets, pillows, and towels.

Each room has drawers or shelves and spaces to hang your clothing. Your room will have a lock but it is suggested that you keep your passport, extra cash and any valuables you might have brought in the office safe.

### **Camp Values:**

At the foundation of Judaism is the idea that each human being is created “In the Image of God.” At camp, this value is expressed in the way we dress, and in the way we speak and act towards one another. Sensitivity, patience, respect, and compassion are expected of every member of the Ramah Staff.

Certain norms in secular society challenge the notion that we are created “In God’s Image.” Societal trends such as tattoos and body piercing negate the underlying Jewish value that our bodies are to be viewed as gifts on loan from God, entrusted to our care. Staff members are reminded that tattoos are strictly forbidden according to Jewish law. Therefore, any staff members with tattoos are expected to keep them covered at all times. While earrings (for both men and women) are accepted, excessive body piercing is not.

### **Curfew:**

Curfew at camp is 1:00am unless the camp administration decides to institute an earlier one. As long as your kitchen responsibilities are finished, you will be given free time during the evening until curfew at which time everyone *must* be back in their bunk for the evening. Staff may not be out wandering in camp past curfew.

### **Smoking:**

Smoking is not permitted on the camp property. This is an important safety policy due to the nature of living in wooden bunks surrounded by trees. You may smoke off grounds on your days off. In Massachusetts, there are strict smoking laws prohibiting smoking in most public areas. Most restaurants, stores, and offices do not allow smoking.

### **Time Off:**

Camp offers kitchen/support staff three days during the week on which days off can be scheduled. We will rotate the days so that everyone will have *one* day off each week and will have had a day off on each of the days offered by the end the summer. You must sign out and in with the kitchen manager for your day off. You will be given an ID card during staff orientation. To ensure the well being and safety of the camp you will be asked to show your ID card to the guard at the entrance to camp each time you enter and exit. Staff *may not* bring any visitors back into camp at any time. Free time will also be scheduled into each day.

During your day off, we hope that you get the opportunity to take advantage of the beautiful sights and attractions of New England and the surrounding area. Transportation to and from the nearest bus/train station will be made available to you. We will try to assist you in making travel arrangements. Please take the camp phone number with you in case of emergencies.

### **Recreation**

While at Camp Ramah in New England, we hope you take advantage of the recreational facilities that are available to you:

- **Swimming** – Camp Ramah in New England has a beautiful lake for swimming and other waterfront activities. Waterfront times will be set for your use during the day. Staff may be at the waterfront *only while a lifeguard is present.*
- **Boating** – Kayaking, windsurfing and canoeing will also be available at designated times *while a life guard is present.*
- **Courts and fields** - Camp Ramah in New England has volleyball, tennis, and basketball courts that you may use when they are not in use by campers. Soccer and softball fields are also available for your use.
- **Staff Lounge** – Our air conditioned staff lounge is open to you and all staff during your free time. There is Wifi in the building for your use. The Staff lounge *closes at 1:00am.*

- **Staff Programming** – Throughout the summer, there will be special events and programs designed just for staff that you are welcome to participate in. We will list the calendar of staff programs in the kitchen for everyone to see. In addition, there will be camp performances that you are invited to attend as well.

**Medical Forms:**

You must bring an updated medical form with a current immunization history (in English) with you to camp. There is always a doctor and nurses available on premises to assist you with minor illnesses and injuries. If you need further treatment, all medical bills must be paid by you and you must then submit them to your insurance. All hospitals and most doctors' offices take major credit cards for payment.

**Communications:**

**Mail:** Your name – Kitchen Staff  
Camp Ramah in New England  
39 Bennett Street  
Palmer, MA 01069

**Telephone:** Kitchen Office  
Camp Fax 413-283-6661  
Camp Winter Office 781-702-5290  
Camp Winter Fax 781-702-5239

Staff may use cell phones when *not* on duty and *not* in front of campers.

**Kashrut:**

Kashrut is a Jewish policy regarding food preparation and eating. In its simplest sense, it means that we don't mix meat and dairy products at the same meal and that we only serve products that are certified "Kosher" according to Rabbinic authorities. We will teach you about these policies for your work in the kitchen during staff training. It is required that while you are working or eating in the dining hall or in front of campers and staff you respect this policy as well. Non-kosher food is not allowed anywhere in camp.



**Alcohol and Drug Policy:**

**Use or possession of illegal drugs is, by definition, illegal.** In the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, use or possession of alcoholic beverages by **anyone under the age of 21 is illegal.** Possession, use, manufacture, distribution or sale of illegal drugs, controlled substances, or alcohol while at Camp Ramah New England or while participating in camp programs is prohibited and *may result in immediate dismissal* and possible criminal charges. **There is absolutely no drinking on the camp premises.** For staff members under the age of 21, this applies off camp premises as well. The administration reserves the right to request an inspection and/or search when there is a reasonable suspicion of drug and /or alcohol use.

**Sexual Harassment Policy:**

It is the goal of Camp Ramah in New England to promote a workplace that is free of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment of employees occurring in the workplace or in other settings in which employees find themselves in connection with their employment is unlawful and will not be tolerated by this organization. Further, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual harassment or retaliation against individuals for cooperation with an investigation of sexual harassment complaint is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated.

Because Camp Ramah in New England takes allegations of sexual harassment seriously, we will respond promptly to complaints of sexual harassment and where it is determined that such inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and impose such corrective action as is necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate.

**In Massachusetts, the definition of sexual harassment is:**

“Sexual harassment: means sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

a) Submission to or rejection of such advances, requests, or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or as a basis of employment decisions; or

b) such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect or unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive work environment.

Under these definitions, direct or implied requests by a supervisor for sexual favors in exchange for actual or promised job benefits, or continued employment constitutes sexual harassment. The legal definition of sexual harassment is broad and in addition to the above examples, other sexually oriented conduct, whether it is intended or not, that is unwelcome and had the effect of creating a work place environment that is hostile, offensive, intimidating or humiliating to male or female workers may also constitute sexual harassment.

While it is impossible to list all those additional circumstances that may constitute sexual harassment, the following are some examples of conduct which if unwelcome, may constitute sexual harassment:

- Unwelcome sexual advances-whether they involve physical touching or not
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life; comment on an individual's body, comment about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies or prowess.
- Displaying sexually aggressive objects, pictures, cartoons
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments
- Inquiries into one's sexual experiences
- Discussion of one's sexual activities

### Complaints of Sexual Harassment

If any of our employees believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment, the employee has the right to file a complaint with our organization. This may be done in writing or orally. If you would like to file a complaint you may do so by contacting Rabbi Ed Gelb, Camp Director or Ed Pletman, Director of Finance and Operations. They are available to discuss any concerns you may have and to provide information to you about our policy on sexual harassment and our complaint process.

### Sexual Harassment Investigation

When we receive the complaint we will promptly investigate the allegation in a fair and expeditious manner. The investigation will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances. Our investigation will include a private interview with the person filing the complaint and with witnesses. We will also interview the person alleged to have committed the sexual harassment. When we have completed our investigation, we will, to the extent appropriate, inform the person filing the complaint and the person alleged to have committed the conduct of the results of that investigation.

If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the offending conduct, and where appropriate we will also impose disciplinary action. Such action may range from counseling to termination from employment and may include such other forms of disciplinary action as we deem appropriate under the circumstances.

In addition to the above, if you believe that you have been subjected to sexual harassment, you may file a formal complaint with either or both of the government agencies set forth below. Using our complaint process does not prohibit you from filing a complaint with these agencies.

1. The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission-EEOC  
10 Congress Street – 10<sup>th</sup> floor  
Boston, MA 02114  
617-565-3200
2. The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination-MCAD  
*Boston Office:* *Springfield Office:*

One Ashburton Place-Rm 601  
Boston, MA 02108  
617-727-3990

424 Dwight Street, Rm 220  
Springfield, MA 01103  
413-739-2145

**Salaries:**

Stipend payments are issued three times during the course of the summer. Any overtime or additional days/hours worked will be calculated according to the current CCUSA rates and given to the staff member in an additional payment.

Camp Ramah in New England is extremely proud to be working with CCUSA and hiring staff from all over the world. Over the years, many long lasting relationships have developed and been maintained across the miles and for years after our staff have worked with us during the summer. We look forward to continuing to develop these ongoing friendships with you.

We hope you enjoy your time with us this summer and keep on coming back for years to come.

