

## Thinking of being a chaperone for a MarineLab trip?

First, let us thank you for considering chaperoning a group to MarineLab. Without parents and teachers such as yourselves, our programs wouldn't be possible. We all want the students to have a great time here, learning while having fun and picking up some new skills along the way, and your help is invaluable in this effort.

This handout is designed to help you understand what is expected from a chaperone, and what you can expect at MarineLab. Please feel free to communicate any problems, expectations, observations or concerns to your Program Leader or any of the educational staff, both before and after your arrival. We will do the same. We are here to give you and your students an enjoyable, educational, and safe exploration of the marine world around Key Largo.

The chaperone group generally includes the LEAD CHAPERONE, who is usually the teacher in charge of the program, GROUP CHAPERONES who are in charge of their boat group, and any other adults or designated chaperones. We require at least one chaperone per boat.

## Chaperone Responsibilities

- **Know how to swim and be comfortable in the water, especially snorkeling in the ocean. You also must be able to get on and off our boats via our swim ladders. You will be taking our "Swim Test" along with your students!**
- Help enforce discipline during discussions or labs. Know and remind students of the safety rules for boat trips and snorkeling - and don't forget to model them!
- "Shepherd" students from one location to another according to the posted schedule.
- During lunch break, dinner break, and overnight, we ask you to keep close tabs on your group. Know the facility rules given during the facility orientation and review the students' options with them.
- Know the students assigned to your boat group.
- Wear a snorkel vest at all times in the water.
- Be prepared for hot conditions on the boat. Stay hydrated and remind the students to hydrate!

## Other Groups

We often have more than one school attending MarineLab at the same time. At your first meal, the staff person on duty will introduce you to the chaperones from the other group. We urge you to get to know the other chaperones, follow the rules and cooperate with each other to make sure everyone has the same great MarineLab experience!

## Facilities

You will be staying in our air conditioned, carpeted dorms. They contain twin sized bunk beds. Depending on your particular school's guidelines, you may or may not be staying with your students. There is always a chance that you will be sharing a dorm with chaperones from another group, so please be prepared for that!

The next page has specific guidelines. Please familiarize yourself with these before arrival! We'll hand you an on-site information sheet as well.

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## **RECREATIONAL/FREE TIME**

Students are allowed the following options for free time:

**Volleyball** - don't let it turn into tackle football. Chaperones will have control of the volleyballs allotted to the group.

**Beach relaxation** - but no climbing on the seawall, no swimming or wading; and please be aware of sunburn danger.

**Ordering pizza** - to be eaten after the evening activity, around 10 pm. Those who do the paying do the eating.

**Gift Shop** is open from 8:30 a.m. until 2:00 p.m., Tuesday through Sunday. Students must be accompanied by a chaperone.

**Relaxing under the pavilion** or other areas where there is relief from the sun EXCEPT for the boat docks. Try to encourage everyone to stay out of the noonday sun during lunch break. Sunburn prevention is a constant concern.

### ***Options not allowed:***

Leaving campus, past the beach entrance, without a chaperone.

Walking the private docks.

Jumping off any dock into the water.

Snorkeling or swimming without staff supervision (they'll get a full dose of supervised snorkeling!)

Fishing

## **TOBACCO / ALCOHOL POLICY**

Tobacco is not allowed on or near program areas such as the boats, cafeteria, volleyball court, labs or classrooms. Any chaperones that wish to smoke must leave the property to do so; however students may not be left unsupervised for any reason.

We prohibit alcohol possession or consumption on-site by chaperones of groups with underage students. This has not been an issue with most groups, but occasionally we find this to be a problem with some groups, especially those with a large number of parent-chaperones.

**OUR DORMS CONTAIN TWIN SIZED BUNK BEDS.** Rooms are carpeted and air conditioned. Dorms are on the second floor, rest rooms are on the first floor.

**CHAPERONES MAY BE LODGED WITH STUDENTS** if group sizes or girl/boy ratios require it, OR chaperones may also be housed with chaperones from another group. Please be aware of and plan for this event.

Do not allow reckless or irresponsible behavior in the dorm room; people get hurt and facilities damaged when children are rowdy and/or unsupervised.

Help enforce the "no food, no drinks, no wet items in the rooms" policy. This really helps cut down on odors, insects and stains. Repair fees will be assessed if there is excessive staining or damage to walls, doors, floor, ceilings or furniture.

It is QUIET TIME after 10:00 PM. It helps if your lead chaperone coordinates the lights out time with the chaperones from any other groups.

If there are other groups attending MarineLab concurrently, make sure your students are aware of this and behave courteously to students from other schools.

We have campus-wide WI-FI for chaperone use. You will receive details on how to log on upon arrival.

## **MEAL TIMES**

At least one chaperone must accompany the students going into and out of the cafeteria. Students may not be unsupervised at any time in the cafeteria. Students and chaperones must wear shirts, shorts and shoes and must clear their own table; please help enforce this rule.

Please be on time for your meals, thank you!