

Camp Onas
Friends Camp Association of Pennsylvania, Inc.

Mission Statement

Friends Camp Association of Pennsylvania, Inc., a nonprofit corporation, owns and operates Camp Onas: a camp, outdoor education facility, and retreat center.

Friends Camp Association strives to be a faithful steward of its heritage, people, land, and other resources based on the Quaker belief of that of God in everyone.

Onas is a caring community where individuals are nurtured and encouraged spiritually, and group unity is fostered through recreation and education in a peaceful and simple environment.

Vision Statement

Ours will be a camp for children where individuals are nurtured in an atmosphere grounded in Onas traditions guided by the Quaker testimonies of peace, equality and simplicity, with an emphasis on service, spiritual growth and fun.

We will remain stewards of our land moving towards environmental sustainability.

Camp Onas will become an increasingly diverse community in which all are welcomed and cherished.

Welcome to Camp Onas!

We at Camp Onas extend a heartfelt welcome to you and your child. Whether you are new to the Onas community or returning for yet another summer, we are glad to have you at Camp Onas!

Camp Onas was founded in 1922 by the Religious Society of Friends (more commonly known as Quakers) and is still owned and operated by the Friends Camp Association of Pennsylvania. Quakers have a commonly accepted tenet of not proselytizing or actively converting non-Quakers. No Quaker practice is forced upon campers, beyond a short explanation of the open silent worship held twice each week.

The rules at Camp Onas, and the spirit of the camp, are guided by Quaker values of simplicity, nonviolence, integrity, equality, and a belief that there is “that of God in everyone.” Our simple facilities, our camping program and activities, as well as in the actions and attitudes of our staff and campers reflect these values. We are committed to nonviolent resolution of conflict, and advocate respect and acceptance regardless of the differences between us. The influence of these beliefs creates a loving, nurturing, and healthy environment for your children to learn, grow, and play.

As parents, there are many things you can do to enhance your child’s experience here at Camp Onas. You will find this handbook a useful tool for preparing your child for Camp Onas. Please take time to read through it, and discuss its contents with your child. As always, if you have any questions, please call the Camp Office at 610-847-5858, or e-mail us at friends@camponas.org.

The Onas Staff

Registration Policy

Please choose your session(s) carefully so that your camper may experience the whole wonderful session from beginning to end. **Late arrival, early departure, and leaving during the camp session are only permitted for emergency reasons.** Removing your child for part of a session affects their experience as a camper, as well as the experience of other campers in their unit. It also creates more work for our staff on already very busy days. All campers must start their session on Check-In day and leave on Check-Out day at the correct times.

Final payments are due 8 weeks before arrival. There is a \$35.00 late fee and a \$30.00 fee for returned checks. Late payments must be made 4 weeks before arrival. After that, payment must be made in cash or money order.

Registrations made within 8 weeks of arrival must be paid in full at time of registration.

A cancellation fee of \$50 is charged until May 15. After that date, the full deposit is forfeited. It is very difficult for us to replace campers after May 15.

About Camp Onas

One of our main focuses at Camp Onas is building a strong community where every individual feels nurtured and cherished in a simple and natural setting. Our expectations and rules help us achieve this goal.

Sleeping Assignments

Creating a friendly community starts in the sleeping tents and pavilions where 8-9 campers, **placed by birthdate**, live with their counselors in tents and pavilions. Boys and girls live on separate “sides,” each with a modern shower house.

Requests for “bunking together” or not bunking with a particular camper cannot be honored. Activities are not scheduled by sleeping units; your child will choose activities on a daily basis and will have free time to be with old and new friends. This policy has proven to be the best way for our campers and staff to build a community built on equality and appreciation for each individual.

Meals at Onas

Mealtime is an important time at Camp Onas. The entire camp sits down together for family-style meals three times a day. Campers sit with assigned, co-ed tables, made up of all age groups. Mealtimes are a time when the whole camp is together, and has the opportunity to meet those outside of their living unit or close friends. We offer a choice of nutritious balanced meals including vegetarian options, but cannot provide for alternative diets or special dietary needs.

Crews

At Onas, everyone is expected to help keep Camp clean and comfortable. In the spirit of equality, every camper and staff member participates in Crews. Crews include tasks such as setting up for or cleaning up after meals, sweeping and tidying up our program areas, and cleaning the boys’ and girls’ shower houses.

Quaker Meeting for Worship

Quaker Meeting for Worship is held twice a week in a peaceful, outdoor setting. This is a quiet time for individual thoughts and the sharing of ideas. Meeting for Worship does not interfere with other religious traditions but recognizes the spiritual needs common to all people.

Mail & Packages

Mail time is very popular; please write to your child often. Cheerful letters with news from home and encouraging words for their camp experience are helpful. Sad or negative news can wait till your camper returns home. Campers are encouraged to write home at least once a session. If your camper sounds homesick or unhappy in the letters you receive, contact the Director. If you feel you need to tell your child news that may be upsetting, please call the Director to arrange when and how to tell them. Please do not send letters by fax or email unless asked to do so by the Camp Director.

Campers may receive packages with clothing, books, toiletries, stationary and other items useful at camp. Please do not send food, treats, money or large objects. These things will be taken and held for parents to pick up at check out.

We ask that you resist the urge to send frequent packages to your child. A child receiving a large number of packages can sometimes create feelings of inequality and jealousy among other campers, and there is little storage space in the bunks for non-essential things. The constant stream of delivery trucks coming into Camp Onas creates extra work for the office and interrupts normal camp life. Channel your love instead into writing letters or post cards to your child. They create much less waste and are just as appreciated by children.

Phone Policy

As a general policy, we do not allow campers to make or receive phone calls. The Camp Director or Nurse will communicate to parents any problems a camper may be having. We do allow phone use in the case of a family emergency, and special arrangements may be made for a birthday call. **Please do not promise your child that they will be able to call you.** This will make it hard for your child to adjust to camp and actually increases the likelihood of homesickness.

Cell phones will be confiscated and held in the office. **Make sure your child leaves their cell phone home with you.**

Pioneer and Out-of-Camp Trips

The Pioneer Program is a 4-day trip for campers 12 years old and up experienced in backpacking and canoeing. A Pioneer Program permission form is sent to all eligible campers and must be signed and returned with the final payment for any camper wishing to be considered for the Pioneer Program.

Day trips are taken to local museums, parks, rock climbing areas and nature centers. Day-long canoeing trips use the nearby Delaware River. A Junior Pioneer Program for campers under 12 is an overnight trip of canoeing, camping at a local campground, and rock climbing. These are optional trips chosen by campers with no parent permission forms required. If you do not want your child to participate in out-of-camp trips, please notify the Director.

All transportation is done in the camp vans with Onas drivers trained in defensive driving. All trips are led by certified Onas counselors.

Camp Store

Your camper will have a store account. Stationary, stamps, pens, toiletries, batteries and flashlights are sold in the camp store. Candy store is held three times a session. The store account is paid at Check-Out and includes a charge for the camp photo. The store account is limited to \$25 per session.

Daily Schedule

An Onas Day

7:30 am	Wake-Up
8:00 am	Breakfast
	Crews and Tent Clean-Up
9:10 am	First Activity Period
10:30 am	Second Activity Period
11:30 am	Free Time
12:00 pm	Lunch
	Rest Hour
1:50 pm	Third Activity Period
3:00 pm	Fourth Activity Period
4:00 pm	Free Time and Free Swim
6:00 pm	Dinner
	Free Time
7:30 pm	Evening Activity
	Snack
9:00 pm	Bed-Time

Camper Safety & Health

Behavior Rules and Guidelines

We expect that campers behave in a way that contributes positively to the camp community and campers quickly learn that our rules and guidelines help everyone have a fun and safe time at Onas. We help campers learn from mistakes and peacefully solve conflicts. Parents will be notified by the Camp Director if a problem is developing with their child so we can work together to find a solution.

Camp Onas will dismiss any campers for the following:

- The use of cigarettes, alcohol or drugs
- Repeated harmful or anti-social behavior towards self or others
- Willful destruction of camp property

Fees are nonrefundable in such cases.

Safety

Your child's safety is our primary concern. Our staff are trained to safely conduct activities and respond to emergencies. Camp Onas is an outdoor, rural environment. We do our best to minimize accidents and expect that campers follow established safety rules. Campers are shown how to avoid contact with poison ivy, ticks or insects and what to do if contact is made.

Health

We maintain an infirmary staffed by a part time nurse and a certified first aid person. A physician is on call 24 hours a day. Indoor sleeping facilities are available for sick or injured campers.

Medication

All medicine must be given to the nurse at Check-In. No medicine is to be left with a camper. Prescriptions must come in the original container with the child's name, drug name and instructions. Our infirmary supplies over-the-counter medicine for headache, stomach ache, etc.

Illness and Injury

The nurse will notify parents if a camper is in the infirmary for longer than 24 hours or must see a doctor for treatment. When emergency care is needed, the Doylestown Hospital is 20 miles away with a complete range of medical services.

Medical bills from the doctor, emergency hospital care, and prescriptions for routine treatments are covered by camp's camper health and accident insurance.

Parents are responsible for arranging any specialized medical care beyond those offered by our camp doctor or emergency services. In such cases, your personal medical insurance policy covers your child.

Preparing for Camp

One of the best ways to prepare your child for camp is to talk about what to expect, and to involve them in the process of getting ready. Pack for camp with your child, so that they know what has been packed and where to find it. Mark all clothing and belongings with your camper's name. Place your camper's name on the outside of their trunk or luggage. We cannot be responsible for lost or damaged clothing or belongings.

Bring: Enough clothing to last two weeks. Laundry is done for campers staying two sessions. A packing list will be sent to you in the mail and can be found at www.camponas.org.

Do Not Bring: Cell phones, money, food, radios, electronic devices or games, skateboards, rollerblades, valuables, or pen knives. Personal music devices are allowed; however there is no place for campers to charge these items.

Arrival (Check-In)

Check-In requires between 1 and 1 ½ hours and is always on a **Sunday**.

Check-In is an exciting time for campers and parents. The Onas staff and counselors want to welcome each child and help them settle in. Please follow these guidelines for an enjoyable and stress-free Check-In:

- Girls Check-In starts at 2 pm and Boys at 3 pm. Families with both boys and girls can check-in their children together but cannot go onto the Boys Side until 3 pm.
- Come to the Penn Pavilion for Check-In. Campers must stay with their parents until they have been fully checked in. Do not go onto the "Sides" until you have checked in.
- Girls bring their luggage to the Penn Pavilion. Boys' luggage should remain in their cars until bunk assignments are received.
- At the Penn Pavilion, campers are given their bunk assignments and medications are given to the Nurse.
- Girls have their luggage taken to the Girls Side and boys drive their luggage to their units.

- Parents can go with their campers to their bunks to meet the unit counselors. General and helpful information about your child can be shared with the unit counselor. Special needs, medical concerns, recent traumatic experiences or anxieties your child may be having should be noted on their health form and communicated to the Camp Director or Nurse before your camper arrives. You can also speak to the Camp Director or Nurse in person at the Penn Pavilion. This information will be shared with staff that directly care for your child.
- We suggest that parents leave camp once campers are settled and involved with their bunk.

Departure (Check-Out)

Check-Out normally requires at least 1 hour and is always on a **Saturday**.

Campers may only be picked up by their custodial parents unless there has been advanced notification to the Camp Director in writing. Arrangements can be made at Check-In.

Check-Out on the last day of the session is from 10:00 – 11:30. It is a busy time for campers and counselors as we prepare everyone to leave or be visited. We are unable to prepare campers to leave early so plan on arriving within the Check-Out times. Come first to the Penn Pavilion where you will pay your camper's store fee, pay any medical bills, and pick up any unused medication. Please bring a check or sufficient cash. We cannot accept credit card payments.

You then will head to your camper's bunk where your camper will be eagerly waiting with their things packed.

You can speak with the bunk counselor about your camper's experience at camp. Please carefully check that all of your camper's belongings are packed and check the lost and found area. After your child has said their goodbyes, you are free to tour the camp or visit the camp store at the Penn Pavilion for t-shirts and other camp items.

Visiting Day

All campers staying for two sessions must be visited on Visiting Day from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm. Campers truly enjoy and benefit from a visit with family members or family friends, and the Onas staff need this time to prepare for the next session and cannot supervise campers. Please inform the Director if someone other than a parent will be visiting.

Come first to the Penn Pavilion to sign your camper out. Families can leave camp for lunch or bring a picnic to enjoy at Onas. There are places nearby for lunch and many interesting places in Bucks County to visit. See www.buckscountycvb.org for ideas. The Onas pool is open from 2:00 – 4:00 for families to enjoy.

Note: Campers staying Second and Third Sessions must leave camp in between sessions.

Tipping Policy

It is the spirit of a Quaker camp that every staff member does their job gladly, to the fullest measure of their ability. If you wish to express appreciation, it should only be done as a contribution to a special Counselor Fund which will benefit all counselors. This can be done at Check-Out. Please do not place our counselors in difficult positions by offering them tips.

Guidelines for Parents while Visiting Onas

Smoking: Camp Onas is a non-smoking property at all times.

Pets: Please control and leash your pet while on camp grounds. Our camp animals will not be leashed.

Special Assistance: If a family member needs assistance getting around Onas, please contact the Camp Director before arriving so we can be ready to assist you.

Homesickness

Homesickness is a normal part of being away at camp. Most first-time campers experience homesick feelings the first few days until they learn the routine and feel comfortable with their counselors and bunk. Our staff is very good at dealing with homesickness and will proactively plan activities in the first few days to help campers adjust to camp life.

There are several things you can do to help your child avoid homesickness:

Involve your child:

Make the decision to go to camp together, learn about the camp together, and come to the May Open House together. When it is time to pack for camp, choose clothing and pack together. Prepare letter writing materials with them so they know how to write a letter home.

Provide some practice time away from home:

Going away for two weeks is a long time for a child who has never been away from home without a parent. Provide opportunities for your child to be away from home for one or two nights with friends or relatives without either of you calling to check in. Remember, you

will not be communicating with your child by phone at camp. The more opportunities your child has to be away from home, the easier it becomes for both of you.

Talk with your child about homesickness:

Prepare them for homesick feelings by explaining that these are normal feelings that everyone experiences and that homesick feelings go away as they become familiar with camp life and participate in camp activities. Share stories of your first time away from home and how you felt. Assure them that Onas counselors understand and will help them deal with homesickness. Show your confidence in their ability to have a positive experience.

Don't make deals for early pick-ups or phone calls:

If you find yourself doing this, it is an indication that your child is not ready for camp. (If you are not sure about your child's readiness for camp, please contact the Camp Director to discuss your options.) You can tell your child that the Camp Director or Nurse will contact you if your child needs you. This will give them the necessary sense of security that their needs will be met.

Have confidence in our ability to help your child:

It is vital that you feel comfortable with your decision to send your child to Camp Onas. Your child will sense your confidence in the camp and this will help them feel comfortable about coming to camp. Rest assured that each camper is important to us and we will work hard to make every camper's experience a great one. We will contact you if your child is unhappy so that we can work together to find a solution and we are always available for you by phone if you have concerns about your child.

Notes: