

Summer Camp Staff FAQ's

Where is Camp Tanasi located?

Camp Tanasi is located near Andersonville on Norris Lake in East Tennessee. Camp Tanasi is 461 acres of beautiful wooded property with cabins and tents, a waterfront program area, pool, archery, hiking trails, and a climbing tower. We are located about 30 minutes from Knoxville, Tennessee.

Where do campers come from?

Our campers come from the three metro areas we serve in our council, (Johnson City, Knoxville, Chattanooga) and surrounding counties in East Tennessee, southwest Virginia, and northwest Georgia.

What if I don't have any specialized skills, but just love working with kids?

Great! We offer training in all of our specialized areas; like aquatics, archery, adventure, wilderness, and leadership development. All staff participate in a full week of on-site training, plus weekly in-service and specialized training for their role if applicable.

If I am teaching an activity all day, when do I get to see the campers in my unit?

There are about 15 "waking hours" in a day. Five or six of those are spent instructing an activity. The rest of the time, you are with your own campers. Meal times, rec time, rest hour, evening programs, etc. are spent with the girls in your own group.

What about time off and free time?

We know for you to be an effective counselor that you need to take time for yourself. We want you to be fresh and invigorated. Specifically, you receive time off each full work day. During that time, you are free from activities with children and may do laundry at the provided facilities, take a walk, or watch a movie. Of course, you may opt to just read quietly or take a nap. In addition, you receive each Saturday off, unless you are with the CIT (Counselor-in-Training) program. When you're on, be ready to work. But when you're off, use your time wisely.

What about personal appearance and dress?

Staff shirts must be worn each day. You will be provided with a uniform shirt for each day (6 total) and given a choice between short- and long-sleeved shirts. Having a neat and clean personal appearance is important because you represent and role model Girl Scouts to our young girls, and GSCSA reserves the right to ensure personal appearance and dress are appropriate Girl Scout attire. If you are teaching art, for instance, you are certainly free to wear walking shorts or other types of shorts/pants as long as they are neat and have a minimum of a 5-inch inseam. Khaki bottoms (shorts, skirts, pants) are required on check-in and check-out days. Sneakers or sports sandals like Keens are the normal footwear. When in main camp or activities, closed-toe shoes are required. Sandals are only allowed in aquatics activities or in your unit.

We insist on a neat appearance for all counselors. Facial piercings, gauges, rings, or piercings on any body part other than the ear are not permitted with the exception that one very small clear plastic (not shiny) stud may be worn in the nose. Ear piercings are limited to two pairs. Male counselors must be clean shaven or well-groomed. Counselors must have a natural hair color while at camp. Counselors

must be willing to cover any visible tattoos and have the option of choosing a long-sleeve staff shirt in order to do so.

Employees seeking religious or disability accommodations may contact human resources.

Is smoking allowed at Camp Tanasi?

No, Camp Tanasi is a non-smoking campus. This includes the use of electronic cigarettes, personal vaporizers, or electronic nicotine delivery systems that simulate tobacco smoking.

How many campers and staff return each summer?

We are proud to say about 40 percent of our staff return annually. We are happy to tell you that about 85 percent of our campers return as well.

Could you describe a typical day at camp?

Each camp day is unique, but the schedule for most days is the same. Camper activities are determined by their program schedule and staff are assigned by the camp leadership team. If you are hired for a specific role such as lifeguard, tower, or archery, you will be teaching that activity for about four hours each day. Below is a picture of a typical day:

Following wake-up, flag ceremony and breakfast, each camp group joins together for morning "kapers," a unit clean up time.

Campers go to two morning activities. Using archery as an example: you, as an archery counselor, would report to your area where your department head would have the curriculum ready for the day. Each morning activity block - about one hour long - would see two separate camper groups until 12:15.

Following morning activity, there is a buffet lunch and "turtle time" or quiet time to relax, read and spend time with the campers with whom you live. You will have approximately two hours off duty at some point during the day.

Following rest time, there are two additional activity periods similar to the morning.

After dinner, you are with your group for evening program and until your unit goes to bed. Evening programs range from theme dinners to campfires and all camp activities. Camper bedtime is from 9:00 to 11:30, based upon age. Weekly themes, hikes, inter-camp competitions, theatre productions, etc. make up some of our special activities and events.

The weather in east Tennessee in the summer is typically humid and warm. You can expect daily temperatures with highs in the 90's and nightly lows as cool as the mid-70's. Sometimes we have thunderstorms. This is a natural camp environment with insects and wild animals (we're home to lots of turkeys, deer, small mammals, and the occasional bald eagle!). Our facilities are well-maintained and we have a maintenance crew on property all summer to keep things running smoothly. Please prepare to hydrate well and dress appropriately to stay cool.

Is the camp one big group?

Tanasi is separated into five distinct units.

Deer Point is for our 3-day campers and 1st – 3rd graders with bunk beds in an air-conditioned lodge with indoor bathrooms. Staff rooms are separate and also have their own bunkbeds and a separate bathroom.

Cedars is for girls in 4th – 8th grade in platform tents. There are army-style cots, but no electricity except in the unit shelter. Cedars has one shared bath house. Staff is housed in a separate platform tent with cots. Some staff choose to sleep in hammocks.

Far Horizons is for girls in 9th – 12th grade in small cabins. There are wooden bed frames with mattresses and a shared bathhouse. The counselors have a small, private room in each small cabin but due to program numbers, might have one cabin to themselves.

Echo Cove is for our girls in the themed Connections. They are in 4th – 8th grade and stay in small cabins that house 8 – 10 girls and 2 counselors per cabin, with a shared bath house. The counselors have a small, private room within each cabin.

Deep Woods is for our CIT (Counselor-in-Training) program which lasts for 12-13 days. CIT lodging is in a lodge with bunk beds in an open great-room. Counselors for CIT stay in a platform tent together.

Wilderness is in the wild, with primitive camping accommodations. Each counselor will be provided a camping hammock to stay in for the week.

Each unit is headed by a Unit Leader who is in direct charge of a unit.

What about salary?

Working and living at camp is an expense-free summer and staff may conceivably leave at the end of the season with their entire salary. In addition to salary, staff are provided with 6 staff shirts, and room and board. Staff are welcome to use the laundry facilities free of charge and we even provide the soap!

Is there a place for staff to get away while on property?

The demands of living with a group of children are great. On camp, there is a staff-only lounge building with a full kitchen, fridge, with phone accessibility. You have access to this during your time off and this is also where the laundry facilities are located.

How's the food?

Good. Really! While we tell you up front that we cannot accommodate special diets, we have extensive salad bars, fruit available at most meals and variety at all meals. Our chefs are experienced and are proud of their homemade cinnamon rolls, specialty sides and desserts, as well as their appetizing main courses. Most campers and staff leave Camp Tanasi saying that the food is great.

Is there a religious affiliation with the camp?

There are no services and our program is not geared toward any religion. We welcome campers and staff from all backgrounds and beliefs, and we do not allow anyone to share or try to persuade others towards their own political or religious beliefs while at camp.

Are men eligible for hire by Camp Tanasi?

Yes, we hire male counselors and kitchen staff. Male staff have separate housing and do not serve as counselors within sleeping units.

Are staff required to live at Camp Tanasi?

No, we have limited positions for day staff only who work in the kitchen or manage an activity (e.g., archery, tower) and then go home at the end of the day.

It sounds good, but really how much work is it?

Camp is very structured and demanding. We like to say it is "the toughest job you will ever love." While our campers are on property, our responsibility for them is 24-hours a day. If you are interested in joining our staff, please give all the information herein careful consideration. We will contact you right away about the availability of a position and arrange a personal interview or video call about the possibilities of being a counselor at Camp Tanasi.

Our leadership staff believe in safe, fun, challenge experiences for girls to help them learn and grow. If you love the outdoors and want to help us teach leadership skills to girls, then this is a great fit for you!