



# Before & After School 2022/23 Frequently Asked Questions

*Please review our FAQ and other [family resources](#) to see if your question has been answered. If you cannot locate an answer to your question, contact information for the Before & After School Team are listed at the end of the FAQ.*

## Registration/Enrollment

- **How do I make changes to my child’s Before & After School registration details?**
  - You can update your family’s registration details within your [Family Portal](#). The registrars will be notified of all changes and will update your child’s registration form within two weeks.
- **How do I add a new child to my account?**
  - Additional children can be added in your [Family Portal](#) by going to the Personal tab/button and selecting “Add New Student”.
- **Will there be both before and after school care options?**
  - Each of our locations has a PM program but a number of locations do not offer AM care. Please review the Family Handbook or Rates & Policies resource for your school to determine if there will be AM programming at your child’s school.
- **Why is there a \$35 non-refundable, annual registration fee?**
  - The \$35 non-refundable, registration fee allows us to complete your child’s registration paperwork so they are qualified to attend any of the Before & After School programs in their district throughout the 2022/23 school year. It also ensures that you are on the notification list for the 2022/23 school year, Summer Day Camp 2023, and the 2023/24 initial announcements.
  - As of the 2022/23 school year, the registration fee has been reduced to \$35 so as to be less of a financial barrier. It is also now completely non-refundable whether or not a child ends up attending any program during the 2022/23 school year.
- **Will families who were enrolled for 2021/22 school year receive priority in the lottery for the 2022/23 programs?**
  - No. Each child needs to be re-registered and signed-up for their school’s lottery each year. The only prioritization that can apply to all families is that each family is assigned a single lottery number so siblings are placed or wait listed together.
- **Which families will be prioritized for lottery placement in the 2022/23 school year programs?**
  - When registering your child for the lottery, there will be a question that asks if they qualify for lottery prioritization. Families who meet one or more of the following criteria will be prioritized for placement in their program: BIPOC children or children whose primary family are BIPOC, children being raised in single guardian households, child or family is engaged with DHS child welfare, children with documented developmental needs, and children who are in an English language learner program. Prioritization does not guarantee placement in program.

- Prioritization only applies while the lottery is open for enrollment. New registrations that are submitted after the lottery will be wait listed chronologically.
- **When can my kindergartener start attending a Before & After School Program?**
  - On their official first day of kindergarten (see your school's schedule) AND after they've turned 5-years-old. Often, districts have kindergarteners attend a "half-day" on their first day of school. Camp Fire can only offer AM care for children who attend a half-day in the morning, and we can only offer PM care for children who attend a half-day in the afternoon. Our Oregon Office of Child Care license prohibits us from having any child attend program before they've started school and before their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- **My child is turning 13-years-old; can I still enroll them?**
  - Camp Fire's Before & After School programs are licensed to accept children from the day they turn 5-years-old to the day before they turn 13-years-old. There are no exceptions for younger or older children. A child who is turning 13-years-old can attend up until their 13th birthday, but the other children in program will primarily be 5-10-years-old.
- **How do I see the various programs my child is enrolled in?**
  - You can see all of the programs that your child is currently enrolled in by selecting the "Attendance" tab/button in your [Family Portal](#). Programs that your child is wait listed for will not show.
- **My child is on the waiting list; when will I be notified of an opening for them?**
  - Camp Fire's Before & After School programs generally accept up to 15 children in the AM programs and 30 children in the PM programs. Some of our sites with higher demand have higher starting capacities or will have their capacities increased mid-year. If your child is wait listed for some or all of the days you've requested, you will be notified as soon as there is an opening for them. All waiting list offers are sent from the Before & After School Registrars to the primary emails listed on your account. **The Before & After School Registrars do not have any advanced notice regarding availability so there is no way for them to estimate how long your child will be on the waiting list.** You can reach-out to the site staff to request the occasional drop-in while your child is wait listed.
- **Do I need to enroll my child for Full Day programs separately?**
  - Yes. Full Day program enrollment is per day and separate from all Before & After School packages. This allows families to enroll for just what they need. Please see our [Full Day program page](#) for information about Full Day program rates, dates, and more specific information on how to enroll for Full Day programming.
- **How do I schedule a drop-in?**
  - If you have already registered your child for one of the Before & After School 2022/23 programs, you can reach-out to the [site staff](#) at their school to request drop-in days. If your child is not yet registered for our 2022/23 school year programs, you will need to complete that first by reaching-out to the [Before & After School Registrars](#) to request access to the drop-in registration. A new registration will take a week or two to finalize before you can contact the site staff to request drop-in days.

## [Schedule Changes](#)

- **How do I make a schedule change?**
  - Contact the [Before & After School Registrars](#) in writing at least 2 weeks before the desired change. A transfer fee of \$30 per child and per change will be applied to your account when making package changes. There is no additional fee when shifting the days of the week your child regularly attends, (i.e., from Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday to Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday) but the Registrar must approve this change in order to keep accurate attendance records. The transfer and withdrawal policies can be reviewed in the [Payment Policies, Rate Sheets, and Family Handbook](#).
- **Who do I notify that my child will be absent from one of their scheduled days?**
  - If your child will be missing, arriving late to, or leaving early from one of their scheduled days, please let the [site team](#) know.
- **How do I request a change to the days my child is registered for?**
  - All transfer requests must be sent in writing to the [Before & After School Registrars](#). The timeline and fees for transfers can be reviewed in the Rates & Payment Policies.
  - [Rates & Payment Policies](#)
- **How do I cancel my child's enrollment for a session?**
  - Cancellation requests need to be sent in writing to the [Before & After School Registrars](#). Please see the cancellation timeline in the Rates & Policies resource to see how much of a refund your family may receive for the cancelled session.
  - [Rates & Payment Policies](#)
- **Can I give my session payment to the staff on-site?**
  - No. Before and After School staff members are not allowed to take money on-site. You can pay outstanding balances and setup automatic payments for future bills in your registration app. If you need alternate payment option please reach out to the [Before & After School Registrars](#).
- **What is the Collective care I am being asked to complete?**
  - The Marie Lamfrom Charitable Foundation and CFC are investing funds to support families and ask that families support each other. Collective Care is everyone contributing as much as they are able, so everyone can benefit. If families have and can give more, those funds will go directly to another Summer Day Camp family who needs support, and be recorded as a tax-deductible gift. If you have less, we want you to tell us what you can afford. Our model is based on trust and a belief that when we have the chance, we will all show up for each other. We will never require families to prove their income but funds are limited so we ask families to reflect on their ability to contribute towards high quality care for their child/ren and answer as honestly as they are able. We strive to offer financial aid to families who otherwise may not be able to afford our programs.
- **How do I apply for Camp Fire's financial aid?**
  - At registration we encourage every family to complete our Collective Care application as soon as they have requested enrollment for their child. If you did not complete the application at that time, you can request the application from one of our Registrar staff or Multi-Site Managers.
- **What do I do if I can't afford my bill?**

- If circumstances have arisen that will prevent you from paying some or all of your upcoming bill, please reach-out to the [Before & After School Registrars](#) immediately so they can work with the team to try to find an alternative solution for your family.
- **I received financial aid from Camp Fire last year; will it apply again this year?**
  - Camp Fire's financial aid expires at the end of each summer. Families who received financial aid for the 2021/22 school year or Summer Day Camp 2022 will need to reapply. Families who received financial aid for the 2022/23 school year may request that their financial aid be applied through Summer Day Camp 2023.
- **Does Camp Fire work with outside agencies to provide financial aid?**
  - Camp Fire has been an approved provider for DHS's [Employment Related Day Care Support](#) (ERDC), Multnomah County's [Community Childcare Initiative](#) (CCI), [Angels in the Outfield](#), PSU's [Jim Sells Grant](#), and [ChildCare Aware](#). Please let the [Before & After School Registrars](#) know if you have been approved for financial aid through any of these organizations.
- **My child has food restrictions/allergies, do I need to send them with their own daily snacks?**
  - At Camp Fire we work to accommodate all food needs for our children. When you register your child, you will be asked to list any food restrictions and/or allergies. We will be sure to have an inclusive snack menu with alternatives for children who have special food needs.
- **Can my child use their cell phone or other electronic devices while at Camp Fire?**
  - We ask that you leave the electronics at home. Camp Fire is not responsible for lost or damaged personal items. Toys, games, cell phones, music players, remote-controlled items, and other electronic devices are not allowed unless otherwise approved by the Site Supervisor. We want your child to engage with the programming and connect with staff members and the other children.
- **Someone new will be picking-up my child today, who do I notify?**
  - Camp Fire must have all authorized pick-up information in writing. You can make changes to your authorized pick-ups in your registration app at any time and the site staff will be notified of the changes the following week. Same week changes to authorized pick-ups must also be sent in writing to the [site staff](#).
- **Who do I notify if I'm running late for pick-up?**
  - If you know that you will be late for pick-up, please let the site staff know so they can plan accordingly.
- **Will the staff and children wear personal protective equipment?**
  - Camp Fire requires all staff to be fully vaccinated and boosted while working in program. Staff must also wear masks while in program with children and when working in Camp Fire spaces with other staff members. The children attending the Before and After School program are not required to wear masks.
- **What happens if a child or staff member gets COVID-19?**
  - We closely monitor symptoms and communicate with families about any potential spread or exposure of COVID-19. Different exclusion steps are required based on a number of scenarios. Please review our Family Handbook regarding health check specifics and look for any updates in guidance throughout the programming calendar.

- **Where am I on my school's waiting list?**
  - After our lottery for Fall 2022 ends, we will use the lottery information to build school lists and message families accordingly the following week. If you have questions about your placement on the waiting list after August 2022, please email [Camp Fire's Before and After School Registrar](#).
  
- **Q. If I don't need care now, but might want it later this school year, will I keep my waiting list spot?**
  - If you receive a placement offer for your child but do not currently need care, you can request a freeze on their waiting list position. The freeze will be set to a date of your choosing so that your child does not lose their position on the waiting list and so you do not continue to receive offers while you are not needing them. A freeze does not ensure that there will be an opening for your child after the set date; just that they will be considered for openings after that date.
  
- **Will you be open on days that schools are closed?**
  - Please see the specific district [Full Day Child Care](#) calendar to check program closures and full day programming.
  
- **What do you in the afternoons?**
  - After school each day, Camp Fire will deliver club-style programming meeting the children where they are at with their interests. Our enrichment programming is built for the students in program to ensure it's developmentally appropriate and specific to the curiosities on-site. We believe in a trauma-informed care approach and emphasize social-emotional learning through play and discovery while intentionally building relationships.
  
- **Will they get a chance to play outside or in the gym?**
  - Yes, we will schedule large motor activity time throughout the day. Schedules will be site-dependent and will vary based on when outside areas and gyms are available for Camp Fire's group to use without the presence of other school programs and activities.
  
- **What are your program hours?**
  - Program hours vary based on specific school and district. Please see the [Family Handbook](#) for more information regarding your school's program hours.

### **Full Day**

- **Do I need to bring a lunch for Full Day programming?**
  - Camp Fire does not provide lunch. Please send your child with a packed lunch that does not need to be refrigerated or heated or let us know if they will be receiving USDA meals from the district. Please do not send sodas, candy, or gum in your child's lunch unless pre-arranged with the Site Supervisor. If you are experiencing financial hardship at this time and are unable to provide your child with a daily lunch, please reach out to the Before & After School Program Director for support.

### **Drop-In Care and Early Release**

- **When can I register for drop-in care?**

- We usually open registration for drop-in only care in October each school year. All drop-in care requires an initial online registration to collect pertinent information and an annual, non-refundable registration fee. Drop-In days must be pre-scheduled and approved by the Site Supervisor after the Before & After School Registrar has approved your registration as complete. *Requests for drop-in care should be made by emailing your program's Site Supervisors at least 2 program days in advance. The Site Supervisor will then approve or deny and billing and payment must occur prior to the date you hope to drop-in when space is available. Due to space limitations drop-in care cannot be guaranteed.*
- **Am I registered for Early Release days?**
  - Early Release days are included in monthly fee for package members that are scheduled to attend the PM program on the day of the scheduled early release. PM drop-in rates and procedures apply for all non-scheduled participants.

### **Supplies, Dietary Needs, Drop-Off & Pick-Up**

- **How do I sign my child in/out of program?**
  - Be prepared to show photo I.D. when picking-up your child. This is for your child's safety, and you may get asked multiple times while our staff get to know you. An authorized adult must be present to sign-out a child. Be sure to sign-in/out with the time you are dropping-off or picking-up. Children cannot sign themselves into or out of program without special written permission from the primary family contact and an agreement with the Site Supervisor.
- **Who do I notify that my child will be absent from one of their scheduled days?**
  - If your child will miss, arrive late to, or leave early from one of their scheduled days, please let the site team know at least two hours prior to program start time. It is not required for you to let us know if you will not be attending AM programming.
- **Someone new will be picking-up my child, who do I notify?**
  - Changes to authorized pick-ups must be sent in writing to the site team for your child's safety. Our authorized pick-up guidelines can be reviewed in the [Family Handbook](#).
- **What should my child bring to program?**
  - Your child should be equipped with weather appropriate clothing (jackets, raincoats, appropriate shoes) for outside daily recess whenever possible, and their homework packet/folder to utilize the dedicated homework time.
- **My child has food restrictions/allergies; do I need to send them with their own snacks?**
  - When you register your child, include food restrictions and/or allergies and we will be sure to have an inclusive snack menu with alternatives for children who have special diets. Further information regarding snacks and allergies can be found in our [Family Handbook](#).
- **My child has an Epi Pen, Inhaler, or other medication that they need periodically. What steps do I need to take?**
  - Please fill in the medication questions when registering your child, but also please follow-up with your Site Supervisor before your child starts program. You will need to fill out a medication dispense form before any medication can be stored at site or administered to your child. Please see our [Family Handbook](#) for more information on medications.
- **When can I drop-off my child at morning program?**

- Check with your Site Supervisor to see when your program opens, you can arrive any time after opening. Do not arrive prior to opening as staff members need time to set up the space for morning program.
- **When can I pick-up my child from after school programming?**
  - You are able to pick-up your child at any point between when program starts and 6:00pm. Please check with your Site Supervisor to confirm the afternoon schedule at your site so they can help you decide on the best time to pick-up your child in order for them to enjoy the full benefits of program time. If you decide to pick-up early from school on a regularly scheduled Camp Fire day, please let your Site Supervisor know by phone or email.

### **Cost of Care, Fee Schedules, and Financial Aid**

- **When will we get our annual registration fee returned?**
  - The annual registration includes a \$35 non-refundable registration fee. If your family has an account balance from previous Camp Fire programming, you are required to pay that balance prior to enrolling for future programming. Please reach out to our registrar team if you need assistance with this.
- **I have no payment due in August. Why is that?**
  - Our registration system spreads payments for the school year evenly over a nine-month payment schedule and prorates your June tuition. This means that although you will be enrolled for program from the first day of school through the last, you will not be making a full payment for August. When you first register for program, you will be asked to pay our annual non-refundable registration fee, and a partial September payment. The remainder of the September payment will be due on September 1<sup>st</sup>.
- **Why do I still have to pay a full monthly payment in November, December, and March?**
  - Our total fees for the school year are divided into nine equal payments, September – May with June being prorated. There are no payments due for August. Some months have significantly more or less school days than other months so by dividing the payments equally rather than by days per month, families can have a clear expectation of what their payment will be each month.
- **Fees are higher than in the past – and I’ve noticed that some other after school programs in the region are cheaper, why is that?**
  - Camp Fire Columbia is a non-profit organization that works every year to provide the best value to families with the highest level of quality possible. We aspire to be the best child care provider in the region, and we evaluate cost every year to make sure we are making our programs as accessible as possible. Recruiting and retaining the best staff to work with your kids is important to us. We work hard to provide a livable wage and benefits including health care, 401K matches, paid parental leave, employee sponsored COVID sick pay, and sick time. In addition to wages, our staff members receive significant paid training to ensure your child is safe, engaged, and active. (Did you know that some programs ask that employees train on their own time?). In addition to staffing costs, your program fees help us pay for rent of space, program supplies, food, field trip costs, and special visitors among other things. We know the cost of childcare is stressful for families and we do everything possible to contain these costs while protecting the quality of experience your child is having.

- **How can I set up my payments to come from my checking account, instead of a credit card?**
  - Thank you for thinking about this! One area of cost we have no control over is credit card fees, and it can be a significant amount. It would help us tremendously if you would consider setting up electronic check using your checking account information, and your account will be automatically debited. You can make this change in your [Family Portal](#).
  
- **Can I give my monthly payment to the site staff?**
  - No. Staff members are not allowed to take payment on site. If you need to pay your bill or have questions about payment options, please contact the [Before & After School Registrars](#).
  
- **Do you offer financial aid?**
  - Yes! Through our Collective Care Program, we offer partial financial aid as a monthly discount ranging from 5%-100% off the fees depending on household size, income, and special circumstances. The Collective Care Program form can be accessed on our website.
  
- **I received financial aid last year; will it apply again this year?**
  - All Camp Fire financial aid is good for only one program year. Families who received financial aid for the 2021/22 school year or 2022 Summer Day Camp will need to reapply for the 2022/23 school year. Financial aid information can be reviewed in our [Rate Sheets, Payment Policies, Family Handbook, and Financial Aid Application](#).