



The L.I.F.E. Guard Experience

Philosophy:

Each element of a camp session at Camp Akita, from arrival to goodbyes, is designed to create an atmosphere in which campers feel connected to God, self, others, and nature. L.I.F.E. Guards assist in creating this “Akita Spirit” by placing the needs of the campers before their own. You will complete tasks with the awareness that your first job is to serve wherever you are called to do so. This principle embodies servant leadership and gives L.I.F.E. Guard its name: **Last Is First Eternal**. In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus calls his disciples to follow this call:

*“Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all.”
-Mark 9:35*

While L.I.F.E. Guards encounter the same “Akita Spirit” as the campers, you will spend your time differently than those living in the cabins. L.I.F.E. Guards remain behind the scenes to set up programming and complete projects that support the full Camp Akita community. This includes serving meals, cleaning the buildings, and completing work projects around camp. This work is difficult and often lacks recognition.

That said, there are few better ways to grow together as a group, learn about yourself, and encounter your faith than through service. L.I.F.E. Guards come to find they are deeply connected through their work and that caring for Camp Akita is a labor of love. Most of all, the L.I.F.E. Guard program will challenge you to “take Akita home” in a new way by continuing to serve others beyond the Camp Akita gates. We hope you will come to find that once you are a L.I.F.E. Guard, you are a L.I.F.E. Guard for life!

Reflections:

As you look forward to your L.I.F.E. Guard experience, here are some questions to consider before you arrive:

- 1) In what spaces or situations have you felt completely accepted and loved? How can you help others feel this way through your actions, words, or presence?
- 2) How will you handle a job you do not enjoy? Will your reaction create community, or create challenges for others?
- 3) Mother Theresa said, “There are no great things, only small things done with great love.” In what way do you bring “great love” to the lives of others? Put differently, what gifts, skills, or aspects of your personality will benefit your fellow L.I.F.E. Guards and the work you do together?



L.I.F.E. Guard: Guidelines for Living Together

Drugs, Alcohol & Tobacco:

Camp Akita has a strict no drugs, alcohol, or tobacco policy. Anyone found with drugs, alcohol, or tobacco will be sent home immediately. **There are absolutely no exceptions to this rule.**

Living Areas:

All L.I.F.E. Guards stay in the upper level of the Lodge: boys on the Dining Hall side and girls on the Vesper Hill side. The L.I.F.E. Guard Lounge, where the whole group will gather for meetings and downtime together, is on the Dining Hall (boys') side. Girls are permitted in the L.I.F.E. Guard Lounge during daytime hours but must return to their side after lights out. Girls are not permitted in the Lounge after lights out and are not permitted in the boys' rooms. Boys are not permitted into the girls' rooms or lounge. Like all Camp Akita cabins, trans and non-binary campers are welcome to room in the area where they feel fits them best, and staff is available to help with these conversations; single rooms are also available.

Lights Out:

There will be times when the L.I.F.E. Guards are able to stay up for fun activities, but on most nights, you will return to your sleeping areas soon after the last full-camp activity of the day. Lights out will be soon after. Getting enough sleep is crucial in order to fully participate in our work projects.

Camp Equipment:

Much of the work done by your L.I.F.E. Guard group involves camp equipment including tools, cleaning supplies, program props, and sound equipment. L.I.F.E. Guards must model good stewardship of the camp by respectfully and responsibly caring for all property, including equipment. Listen carefully to the L.I.F.E. Guard Leaders' instructions and respect the tools you use.

Snacks:

Because of severe allergies, **Camp Akita is a nut-free facility.** If you choose to bring snacks to Camp Akita, know that they may not contain nuts, traces of nuts, or processed in a facility with nuts; if they do, those snacks will be discarded. In general, bringing snacks is not encouraged. L.I.F.E. Guards will be provided with plenty of food for sustained energy throughout the day.

Participate, Don't Anticipate:

Full participation is expected in every aspect of the L.I.F.E. Guard program. This includes work projects, meals, journal time, and any other activities planned for the group. Every L.I.F.E. Guard session is unique. Whether this is your first L.I.F.E. Guard session or you have participated many times, we encourage you to live in the moment and avoid asking (or assuming) what comes next.

Cell Phones:

The L.I.F.E. Guard program provides a unique opportunity to live in the moment, grow as an individual, and build relationships with those around you. We find that cell phones are distracting, exclude others, and prevent participants from fully experiencing Camp Akita. Like the camp staff, **L.I.F.E. Guard cell phones will be collected and stored in a group "cell phone box," which will be kept in the staff office.** Cell phones will be returned for the bus ride home. **Please bring alternative means of listening to music and taking photos.**



L.I.F.E. Guard Daily Schedule

The schedule for L.I.F.E. Guards will change depending on the program for that session. Below is a general schedule of what the L.I.F.E. Guards will do; however, the L.I.F.E. Guard Leaders will assign specific tasks daily. Focus on participating, not anticipating!

- ♦ Wake-up and ring the bell to wake the full camp
- ♦ Eat breakfast
- ♦ Serve breakfast to the full camp, then clean up
- ♦ Morning work projects (cleaning)
- ♦ Morning meeting and journal time
- ♦ Set-up for and eat lunch
- ♦ Serve lunch to the full camp, then clean up
- ♦ Afternoon work projects (maintenance)
- ♦ Hydrate!
- ♦ Shower and relax
- ♦ Set-up for and eat dinner
- ♦ Serve dinner to the full camp, then clean up
- ♦ Set up for evening programs
- ♦ Participate in or help facilitate evening programs
- ♦ Clean up evening programs
- ♦ Serve snack to the full camp, then clean up (and eat some, too!)
- ♦ Group time
- ♦ Sleep!

Between Sessions:

L.I.F.E. Guards serve for two camp sessions and will return home on the bus between sessions. L.I.F.E. Guards are welcome to leave personal items (such as bedding and clothes) at Camp Akita between sessions. Consider bringing a small bag or backpack to camp to bring home essentials between sessions, including medication, toiletries, or laundry.



Packing List

Many of our activities involve working hard and getting dirty. Please bring clothes that allow you to walk, carry, bend down, and move with ease. Avoid bringing new or expensive items to camp. Please pack in luggage marked with your name; **do not pack items in unmarked trash bags as these can easily get mixed up!**

Clothes & Shoes

- ♦ Camp-appropriate clothing for the duration of each session: shirts and shorts that contain no references to drugs or alcohol.
- ♦ Long pants for working. These are crucial for work projects such as clearing trails to prevent exposure to thorns and poison ivy.
- ♦ Several old t-shirts that can get dirty or stained.
- ♦ Baseball hat. L.I.F.E. Guard may be assisting in the kitchen, and a hat is required.
- ♦ A jacket or sweatshirt for evenings (it gets chilly!).
- ♦ Socks and underwear.
- ♦ Closed-toed shoes suitable for working and hiking (and might get muddy!).
- ♦ A pair of flip-flops or sandals for the lake.
- ♦ Swim wear.

Gear

- ♦ Bedding for a twin-sized mattress (or a sleeping bag) and pillow.
- ♦ 2 reusable water bottles.
- ♦ Rain jacket with hood.
- ♦ Sunscreen.
- ♦ Insect repellent.
- ♦ Flashlight or headlamp.
- ♦ Disposable or digital camera that is not a cell phone.
- ♦ A watch or alarm clock.
- ♦ Toiletries and shower gear.
- ♦ Towel for the shower.
- ♦ Beach towel for the lake.
- ♦ Work gloves.
- ♦ Personal items, like journal, pens, Bible, or book.
- ♦ Any prescription medications listed on your medical form (keep separate from luggage and turn in during Check-In).

Items not to bring:

- ♦ Tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs
- ♦ Any medication not listed on your medical form, including pain relief, melatonin, or other medication. All medication must be listed on your medical form and administered through the camp nurse.
- ♦ Knives, axes, firearms, pyrotechnics, or other weapons
- ♦ Any valuables or items of sentimental value
- ♦ Cell phones. See policy above. If you bring a phone, we will store it away until the end of your session.