



Camp Chief Hector YMCA: Outdoor Risk Management

For families and participants of Camp Chief Hector YMCA's programs, it is essential to understand that our programs inherently involve risks. These risks are an integral part of the valuable growth and learning opportunities we provide.

We acknowledge that outdoor adventures come with potential challenges— physical, emotional, and related to personal belongings. We are dedicated to effectively managing risks to minimize the possibility of serious harm.

Our commitment to safety is comprehensive. We have established policies, rigorous staff training protocols, and accreditation standards to ensure the highest level of safety for all participants. Our commitment is upheld by the reporting and review of incidents and a culture which educates and empowers all staff and participants to play an active role in managing risk. We want every participant to feel empowered to explore, learn, and grow in a supportive environment.

At Camp Chief Hector YMCA, we encourage participants to try new things and step outside of their comfort zone. In doing so, we create opportunities for participants to take risks in a controlled environment. The camp environment provides unique opportunities for children, youth, and adults to challenge themselves, learn new outdoor skills, further develop interpersonal skills, connect with nature, and make new friends.

We understand that choosing the right outdoor program for your child is a significant decision, and we take our responsibility seriously. You can trust that we are dedicated to providing an enriching experience where participants can thrive, learn new skills, make new friends, and create lasting memories.

Risk Awareness

Any of the activities at Camp Chief Hector YMCA involve certain social, emotional, and physical risks; many of them include the risk of disability, death, or psychological trauma in the event of a serious incident.

Some of the potential risks at Camp Chief Hector may be familiar to us in our home communities: motor vehicle transportation, lightning, tree fall, uneven ground, inclement weather, fire, hot liquids, infectious illnesses, and equipment failure.

Some risks may be more unique to the setting at Camp Chief Hector YMCA: lake water, river water, falls from a high ropes facility due to equipment failure or an error in judgment, wildlife encounters (including cougar and bear), falls from horses, bites/kicks/other encounters with horses, rock fall, uncontrolled slide on snow or rock, a fall from heights, steep terrain, and the risk of remoteness from emergency medical services.

The risks listed, and other risks not listed, can pose the potential of harm to even a well trained leader. Any of Camp Chief Hector YMCA's activities can, due to an error in judgment, or to factors of nature beyond a leader's control, become harmful and potentially life-threatening.

A family must weigh the risks that may be encountered at camp with the benefits of the camping experience, while considering the strengths of Camp Chief Hector YMCA's risk management policies and procedures. Camp Chief Hector YMCA reserves the right to alter the program at any time without compensation to participants, parents or guardians.



Camp Chief Hector YMCA

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Staff Core Competencies

At the core of our risk management policy is staff. Staff at Camp Chief Hector serve as primary risk managers in the field. As such, we consider the following core competencies when we are hiring and training our staff members:

- **Knowledge:** staff understand our risk management policy and they have the knowledge necessary to employ it
- **Experience:** staff are experienced in outdoor environments and working with youth
- **Judgment:** we train staff to make decisions based on our risk management policy
- **Group management:** staff manage a group of participants in a way that balances the risks and benefits
- **Technical skills:** staff use technical skills that manage risk and reduce hazard
- **Attitude:** staff personalities align with our risk management policy
- **Willingness to grow:** staff are willing and able to further develop their ability to manage risk and reduce hazard

System Risk Management

The following policies and procedures are part of Camp Chief Hector's larger risk management plan:

- All staff are certified with program-appropriate first aid training
- All staff maintain annual CPR training
- All staff and volunteers have submitted a current Police Reference Check with Vulnerable Sector Screening
- Camp Chief Hector is an accredited Alberta Camping Association facility
- Camp Chief Hector is supported by the YMCA of Calgary's Chief Risk Officer in collaboration with the Health, Safety, and Risk Committee
- Camp Chief Hector YMCA participates in regular internal and external safety audits
- Camp Chief Hector YMCA operates in conjunction with land managers and permitting authorities
- Camp Chief Hector YMCA participates in risk management research and development conferences and workshops in the outdoor industry
- Camp Chief Hector YMCA conducts regular reviews of the feedback provided by family and staff surveys.

Questions or Concerns about this Document

If you would like to discuss or have questions about the above information, please send an email to camp@ymcocalgary.org