

UGA Programs and Activities Serving Minors
Residential Programs - Medication Best Practices

Overview:

Safe management of medication during residential programs should be part of camp planning and operations. The American Camp Association and the Alliance for Camp Health recommend medication at residential programs be collected and held by program staff. This is to ensure that only the minor who needs, and whose parents have authorized, the medication has access to it. Best practice is for all minors to turn in prescription and over-the-counter medication upon arrival for the program. Program staff will hold the medication and provide the medication to the minor as they need it.

Critical information:

Program staff are not permitted to prescribe or administer medication unless licensed medical personnel are engaged for that purpose.

Medication should be collected and held by program staff, then provided to the minors as needed. At no time would program staff handle the individual minor's medication directly; nor should program staff provide guidance on how or what medication to take. If the minor is unsure of the medication to take or correct dosage, parents/guardians should be contacted for clarification.

Recommended Best Practices:

1. Share medication policies in pre-program communications to parents/guardians.
2. Require parents to bring all medication in the original containers, both prescription and over-the-counter, in a bag with the minor's name written on it. These bags would be turned in to staff at program check in. Bags would be held by program staff and then provided to minors when medication needs to be taken. Staff would give the entire bag to the minor and receive it back as soon as medication has been taken. Exceptions should be made for emergency medication, such as inhalers and epi-pens; these should be kept by the minor at all times (exception would be if the program works with very young minors, approximately 8 years old and younger; in those cases program staff should hold emergency medication, but program leaders would need to ensure emergency medication was always near the minor).
3. While it is the minor's responsibility to take their own medication, program staff should ensure medication is always at the correct location and available at needed times. This is especially important for programs that have multiple operating locations.
4. Include a Authorization to Administer Medication form during program registration. This form will ask parents/guardians to list all prescription and over-the-counter medication their child is allowed to take while at the program. An example form is available at [Medication Form](#). Any medication not listed on the form would require program staff to call the parent/guardian for verbal permission to provide to the minor.
5. Keep a Medication Administration Record. All prescription and over-the-counter medication taken by a minor would be recorded on the record. If applicable, verbal permission from parents/guardians could also be noted on this record.
6. Train program staff on proper medication handling and responsibilities.
7. For larger camps and programs, consider identifying program staff as lead for coordinating medication.

If program administrators have questions about best practices for medication, contact Brian Stone, UGA's Director of Compliance for Programs and Activities Serving Minors at programsforminors@uga.edu or 706-542-7255.

Current as of April 23, 2026