



Camp SIGN 2017

Counselor Application Instructions

Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services

4900 N. Lamar Blvd., Suite 3419; Austin, Texas 78751

The Health and Human Services (HHS), Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services (DHHS) is looking for persons interested in working as a counselor, activity leader counselor, or a counselor in training for a week long camp program called Camp SIGN.

Camp SIGN provides an environment of acceptance and encouragement for young persons ages 8 through 15 who are deaf or hard of hearing regardless of their communication mode. Camp SIGN strives to reduce the isolation often felt by persons who are deaf or hard of hearing by offering a place to socialize with others with the similar means for communicating.

If you are interested in working with children who are deaf or hard of hearing or to develop your leadership skills, Camp SIGN may be the place to start.

Camp SIGN is held just 35 miles North of Houston at Camp Misty Meadows in Conroe, Texas, which is owned and operated by the Girl Scouts of San Jacinto, Inc. Activities may include: swimming, archery, arts and crafts, horseback riding, and drama.

Application Process

To apply for a position at Camp SIGN, submit the following materials to DHHS by **May 5, 2017**

- Completed Camp SIGN Application for Counselors,
- Photocopies of specialized training certificates, if any,
- Photocopy of your valid state driver's license or government ID,
- Resume, and
- Fair Credit Report (for criminal background check).

Staff application packages received after the established deadline will be considered on a space-available basis.

Mail or email completed application package to:

Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services: Camp SIGN
PO Box 12904
Austin, TX 78711
Email: DHHS.Training@hhsc.state.tx.us

Additional information for counselors can be found in the following documents:

1. Counselor Expectations,
2. Qualifications and General Duties, and
3. Additional Counselor Requirements from DHHS Policy.

1. Counselor Expectations

Camp counselors serve as role models for the children at all times including showing appropriate behavior and personal dress and grooming. **SMOKING, USING AN ILLEGAL SUBSTANCE AND CONSUMING ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES ARE STRICTLY PROHIBITED ON THE CAMP GROUNDS AND WILL LEAD TO DISMISSAL AND POSSIBLE ARREST.** Staff members are expected to demonstrate a high degree of dedication and teamwork.

Counselors must be available from **JULY 29 through AUGUST 5, 2017 (Saturday - Saturday)**, and must be available for the entire period. The date of orientation and training for **new and old** Camp SIGN staff members will begin in the morning of **July 30, 2017 (Saturday)**.

NOTE: Your application for a counselor position at Camp SIGN will be evaluated based on your qualifications in relation to the job duties described in the *Qualifications and General Duties*. It is very important that you list all of your experience and qualifications such as archery, lifeguard, First Aid, CPR or related health safety training. Please provide a copy of each certificate and credential you may have. If you have good lip-reading skills, please mention it in your essay. For the essay, be sure that you provide all job duties you are qualified to perform. Please read the enclosed "Job Responsibilities for Counselors and Junior Counselors" and "Criteria for Hiring Counselors and Junior Counselors".

2. Additional Counselor Requirements from DHHS Policy

DHHS Services Manual, Chapter 6.4.1 Job Responsibilities for Counselors

Counselors are to:

- assist in the responsibility of keeping campers safe;
- supervise counselors-in-training;
- coordinate and execute activities for campers;
- live in a cabin with assigned campers and be responsible for them;
- keep track of the whereabouts of each camper in their cabin group;
- oversee cleaning of cabin;
- assist in assigned camper work responsibilities;
- help campers to understand and follow the camp rules;
- line up campers at the appropriate times;
- encourage campers to learn and to develop new skills; and
- serve as a role model to the campers, junior counselors and counselors-in-training.

Junior counselors are to:

- assist in the responsibility of keeping campers safe;
- assist counselors to ensure activities for campers are carried out;
- live in a cabin with assigned campers and be responsible for them;
- keep track of the whereabouts of each camper in their cabin group;
- assist the counselor to ensure the cleaning of cabin;
- assist in assigned camper work responsibilities;
- help campers to understand and follow the camp rules;
- line up campers at the appropriate times;
- encourage campers to learn and to develop new skills; and
- serve as a role model to the campers.

Counselors-in-training are to:

- assist in the responsibility of keeping campers safe;
- assist counselors to ensure activities for campers are carried out;
- live in cabin with assigned campers and be responsible for them;
- keep track of the whereabouts of each camper in their cabin group;
- assist the counselor and junior counselor to ensure the cleaning of cabin;
- assist in assigned camper work responsibilities;
- help campers to understand and follow the camp rules;
- line up campers at the appropriate times;
- encourage campers to learn and to develop new skills; and
- serve as a role model to the campers.

6.4.2 How to Apply

To serve as a Camp SIGN counselor or junior counselor, a person must:

1. complete Camp SIGN Application for Counselors; and
2. send it to DHHS, 4900 North Lamar Blvd, Suite 3419. Austin, TX 78751 or by email: DHHS.Training@hsc.state.tx.us

To serve as a Camp SIGN Counselor-in-Training, a person must:

1. complete Camp SIGN Application for Counselors-in-Training; and
2. send it to DHHS, 4900 North Lamar Blvd, Suite 3419. Austin, TX 78751 or by email: DHHS.Training@hpsc.state.tx.us

6.4.3 Criteria for Hiring Counselors

DHHS approves applications for the pre-offering and hiring of counselors on a first-come, first-served basis, according to the applicant's:

- age (minimum 21 years old);
- level of education (high school diploma required);
- sign language skills and the ability to communicate effectively with campers required;
- experience working at a camp (preferred);
- experience training and supervising children (preferred);
- gender or gender identity; and
- score, as determined by established evaluation criteria that include:
 - camp experience;
 - communication skills;
 - lip-reading skills;
 - camp skills;
 - certifications maintained; and
 - responses to essay questions.

Gender or gender identity and age are used to determine sleeping space in the cabins. Cabins are divided by gender and age. A counselor is assigned to a cabin based on gender or gender identity.

6.4.4 Criteria for Hiring Junior Counselors

DHHS approves applications for the pre-offering and hiring of junior counselors on a first-come, first-served basis, according to the applicant's:

- age (minimum 18 years old);
- level of education (high school diploma required);
- sign language skills and the ability to communicate effectively with campers;
- experience working at a camp (preferred);
- experience training and supervising children (preferred);
- experience as a counselor-in-training experience (preferred);
- gender or gender identify; and
- score, as determined by established evaluation criteria that include:
 - camp experience;
 - communication skills;
 - lip-reading skills;
 - camp skills;
 - certifications maintained; and
 - responses to essay questions.

Gender or gender identity and age are used to determine sleeping space in the cabins. Cabins are divided by gender and age. A junior counselor is assigned to a cabin based on gender or gender identity.

6.4.5 Criteria for Hiring Counselors-in-Training

DHHS approves applications for the pre-offering and hiring of counselors-in-training on a first-come, first-served basis, according to:

- age (at least 16 years old but not more than 17 years old);
- hearing loss (must be deaf or hard of hearing);
- ability to communicate effectively with campers using sign language skills;
- camp experience for persons who are deaf in the last 2 years; that is, attendance at camps such as:
 - Camp SIGN;
 - Camp Aspen; or
 - Texas Lion's Camp;
- letters of recommendation from a former camp counselor or camp director;
- Texas residency;
- gender or gender identity; and
- score, as determined by established evaluation criteria that include:
 - camp experience;
 - communication skills;
 - lip-reading skills;
 - camp skills;
 - certifications maintained; and
 - responses to essay questions.

Gender or gender identity and age are used to determine sleeping space in the cabins. Cabins are divided by gender and age. A counselor-in-training is assigned to a cabin based on gender or gender identity.

6.5 Process for Pre-Acceptance and Hiring

An applicant for a counselor position who is approved for pre-acceptance and hiring is:

1. checked for criminal background (convictions); and
2. sent a pre-acceptance letter that includes:
 - a medical form [Camp SIGN Counselor Medical Information](#) (DARS staff members only);
 - W-4 and I-9 forms;
 - [Camp SIGN Counselor Release](#) (DARS staff members only); and
 - position, salary, and cabin group information.

A pre-accepted applicant who submits the required paperwork is moved to hired status and is sent a final letter, which includes:

- general information;
- items to bring; and
- directions to camp.

An applicant not approved for pre-acceptance is:

1. placed on a list based on pre-acceptance order; and
2. selected as slots become available as appropriate.