

CAMPCARES Program Guidelines & Participation Policy

A Program of VETCares, Inc.

CampCares is an immersive peer-based wellness experience designed to support reflection, personal growth, connection, and resilience for veterans, surviving spouses, and members of the military-connected community. These guidelines help participants understand program expectations before applying.

Program Overview

CampCares is designed to provide a safe, supportive environment where participants can step away from daily stress, reflect on life challenges, and reconnect with purpose.

Five Pillars of Growth

1. Relational

Trust rebuilding, peer accountability, communication discipline, community engagement. Peer support improves engagement and reintegration outcomes.

2. Financial

Responsibility ownership, budgeting mindset, long-term planning, and stability behaviors. Financial strain is strongly associated with mental health distress and relational conflict. This pillar is reinforced through integrated through 12 months of HUD-approved counseling access.

3. Identity

Purpose clarification, values alignment, post-service self-definition, meaning reconstruction. Identity continuity supports adjustment outcomes.⁸

4. Leadership

Self-leadership, responsibility ownership, servant leadership principles, burnout prevention, community stewardship. Leadership and agency are linked to resilience.⁹

5. Wellness

Physical health, medical well-being, and mental resilience, Consistency and wellness habits support medical health, improve mood, and enhance overall. wellness¹⁰¹¹

CampCares uses peer connection, guided discussions, outdoor activities, and personal reflection to support growth.

CampCares is **not therapy and does not provide medical or mental health treatment.**

Participants should continue working with their own healthcare providers when appropriate.

Who CampCares Is Designed For

- Veterans
- Surviving spouses
- Gold Star family members
- Members of the military-connected community
- Selected VAREP members and community leaders (depending on program track)

Participation Is Voluntary

- Participation in CampCares is completely voluntary.
- Participants may withdraw from the program at any time.
- Because the experience is immersive and group-focused, participants are encouraged to attend and engage fully in program activities.

Physical & Outdoor Activity

- Light physical activity
- Walking on uneven terrain
- Exposure to weather and natural environments
- Group exercises and team activities

Participants should be physically capable of participating or disclose any limitations during the application process.

Some activities occur in locations where emergency services may take time to arrive.

Health & Medical Responsibility

Participants are responsible for:

- Disclosing relevant health conditions
- Bringing required medications
- Managing personal health needs
- Informing staff of safety concerns

In an emergency, CampCares staff may contact emergency services or arrange transportation to a medical facility.

Participants remain responsible for any medical costs incurred.

Respectful Conduct

CampCares is built on trust, respect, and mutual support.

Participants must:

- Treat others with dignity and respect
- Follow safety guidance from staff
- Respect emotional boundaries
- Support a safe and positive environment

The following behaviors are not permitted:

- Harassment or intimidation
- Aggressive or disruptive behavior
- Discrimination or hostility
- Refusal to follow safety instructions

Participants who compromise the safety of others may be removed from the program.

Substance & Weapons Policy

For safety reasons, the following are prohibited during the program:

- Alcohol
- Illegal drugs
- Unauthorized weapons

Prescription medications are permitted when used as directed.

Violation of this policy may result in removal from the program.

Confidentiality & Privacy

CampCares is a confidential environment designed to allow participants to speak openly.

Participants must respect the privacy of others and agree not to share:

- Personal stories
- Emotional disclosures
- Group discussions
- Participant identities

Participants may share their own experiences but must not identify or expose other participants.

Confidentiality helps maintain trust and safety within the group.

Electronics & Social Media

To support focus and immersion:

- Phones and electronic devices are limited during activities
- Devices may be used during designated free time only
- Social media posting during the program is not permitted

Participants are generally asked to wait approximately 14 days after the program before posting publicly about the experience.

Photography & Media

CampCares may document activities through photography or video for purposes such as:

- Program awareness
- Educational materials
- Donor and sponsor reporting
- Public outreach

Participation in media is voluntary.

Participants may decline being recorded without affecting program participation.

Program Schedule & Environment

Participants should expect:

- Guided group discussions
- Outdoor and experiential activities
- Personal reflection time
- Quiet hours and scheduled rest periods

Respect for the schedule helps protect the experience for all participants.

Program Changes

CampCares may adjust activities, schedules, or locations due to:

- Safety concerns
- Weather conditions
- Program logistics
- Participant well-being

Background Checks

For certain roles or program eligibility considerations, VETCares may conduct background checks as permitted by law.

Participant Selection

Submitting an application does not guarantee participation.

Selection may consider:

- Program readiness
- Participant safety considerations
- Program capacity
- Fit with the program objectives

Selected participants will receive additional program forms and agreements prior to attending.

Important Program Disclaimer

- CampCares is a **peer-led wellness and personal growth program**.
- CampCares does **not provide medical treatment, mental health therapy, or crisis intervention services**.
- If a participant requires clinical care or is experiencing a mental health crisis, CampCares staff will assist in connecting them with appropriate professional resources.

For additional information about CampCares programs:

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