

## High- Adventure Risk Advisory to Health- Care Providers and Parents

**Swamp Base Experience:** Participation at any high adventure base can be physically, mentally, and emotionally demanding. High adventure offers a unique experience that is not risk-free.

Knowledgeable staff will instruct all participants in safety measures to be followed. *Be prepared* to listen to and carefully follow these safety measures and to accept responsibility for the health and safety of yourself and others.

Swamp Base's program can involve exposure to accidents, illness, and/or injury associated with a physically demanding high adventure program conducted in a sometimes hostile aquatic environment. Swamp Base's trek involves long distance paddling which may expose participants to severe weather conditions such as high heat and humidity, thunderstorms, and intense southern sun. This exposure can lead to sunburn, heat exhaustion, heat stroke, dehydration, asthma, and heart attacks. If you are prone to any of these illnesses, please reconsider participating in our high adventure treks.

The swamp environment also includes dangerous flora and fauna, including alligators, venomous snakes, wasps/bees, poison ivy and poison oak. Proper caution should be taken when participating in this environment as to reduce the chance for injury or death.

**Risk Advisory.** Louisiana Swamp Base has an excellent health and safety record and strives to minimize risks to participants by emphasizing appropriate safety precautions. Each crew is required to have at least one adult member trained in First-Aid, CPR, and weather hazards. Medical and search-and-rescue services are provided in response to an accident or emergency. *However, response times can be affected by location, terrain, weather, or other emergencies and could be delayed for hours.*

**COVID-19 Advisory:** Louisiana commenced Phase 2 reopening protocols on June 5, 2020. Social distancing, the use of masks and 50% occupancy requirements remain in effect and will be followed by all Swamp Base participants and staff. There is a general prohibition to "stay over camps." However, our crews are comprised of 8-10 Scouts and Scouters

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who are known to each other and will remain together throughout the trek. Additional sanitation and monitoring protocols have been implemented.

**Allergies:** Participants who have had an anaphylactic reaction due to any cause **MUST** contact Louisiana Swamp Base before arrival. You will be required to have appropriate treatment with you. The individual and at least one other member of the group must know how to administer the treatment. If you do not bring appropriate treatment with you, you will be required to buy it before you will be allowed to participate.

**Medications:** Each participant who has a condition requiring medication should bring an appropriate supply for the duration of the trip. Consider bringing duplicate or even triplicate supplies of vital medications. People with allergies that have resulted in severe reactions or anaphylaxis must bring with them sufficient unexpired EpiPens.

**Asthma:** Asthma must be well-controlled before participating. This means: 1) the use of a rescue inhaler less than two times per week (except use for the prevention of exercise induced asthma); 2) nighttime awakenings for asthma symptoms less than two times per month. Well-controlled asthma may include the use of long-acting bronchodilators, inhaled steroids, or oral medications. You may not be allowed to participate if: 1) you have asthma not controlled by medication; or 2) you have been hospitalized/gone to the emergency room to treat asthma in the past six months; or 3) you have needed treatment by oral steroids in the past six months. You must bring an ample supply of your medication and a spare rescue inhaler that are not expired. At least one other member of the crew should know how to use the rescue inhaler. Any person who has needed treatment for asthma in the past three years must carry a rescue inhaler on the trek. If you do not bring a rescue inhaler, you must buy one before you will be allowed to participate.

**Immunizations:** Each participant must have received a tetanus immunization within the last 10 years.

**Hypertension (High Blood Pressure):** Upon arrival at Louisiana Swamp Base, all adult participants will have their blood pressure checked. Participants should have a blood pressure less than 140/90. People with hypertension (greater than 160/100) should be treated and controlled before attending, and should continue on medications while participating. The goal of treatment should be to lower the blood pressure to normal levels. Those individuals with a blood pressure consistently greater than 160/100 may be kept off the water until their blood pressure decreases.

**Seizures (Epilepsy):** The seizure disorder must be well-controlled by medication. A well-controlled disorder is one in which a year has passed without a seizure. Exceptions to this guideline may be considered on an individual basis and will be based on the specific type of seizure and likely risks to the individual/other members of the crew.

**Diabetes:** Both the person with diabetes and one other person in the group need to be able to recognize signs of excessively high or low blood sugar. An insulin-dependent person who was diagnosed or who has had a change in delivery system (e.g., insulin pump) in the last six months is advised not to participate. A person with diabetes who has had frequent hospitalizations or who has had problems with low blood sugar should not participate until better control of the diabetes has been achieved. If an individual has been hospitalized for diabetes related illnesses within the past year, the individual must obtain permission to participate.

**Weight Limits:** Each participant in a Louisiana Swamp Base trek should not exceed the maximum acceptable weight for height in the table shown in Part C of the BSA Annual Health and Medical Record. No participant's weight can exceed 295 pounds.

### **Recent Musculoskeletal Injuries and**

**Orthopedic Surgery:** Participants will put a great deal of strain on their joints. Individuals who have significant musculoskeletal problems (including back problems) or have had orthopedic surgery or injuries within the last six months must have a letter of clearance from their treating physician to be considered for approval, and Louisiana Swamp Base should be contacted in advance of participation. Permission is not guaranteed.

### **Psychological and Emotional Difficulties:**

Parents and advisors should be aware that no high-adventure experience is designed to assist participants in overcoming psychological or emotional problems. Experience demonstrates that these problems frequently become worse when a participant is under stress from the physical and mental challenges of a remote wilderness setting. Medication must never be stopped prior to participation and should be continued throughout the entire experience.

**Cardiac or Cardiovascular Disease:** Adults or youth who have a history of chest pain, myocardial infarction (heart attack), a family history of premature heart disease, or heart surgery including angioplasty may consider a physician-supervised stress test. Even if the stress test results are normal, the testing is done without portage packs or canoes and does not guarantee safety. If the results are abnormal, the individual is advised not to participate.

*I understand that, if any information I/we have provided is found to be inaccurate, it may limit and/or eliminate the opportunity for participation in any event or activity. I have also read and understand the supplemental risk advisories. The participant has permission to engage in all high-adventure activities described, except as specifically noted by me or the health-care provider. If the participant is under the age of 18, a parent or guardian's signature is required.*

### **Participant's signature:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/guardian signature for youth:

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(If participant is under the age of 18) Second parent/guardian signature for youth:

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_