

# Event Planning Checklist

*a helpful guide to creating an unforgettable experience on our site*

## 1. Set your goals - Start here!

If you're reading this document, you have probably already completed this step. Every event happens for a reason. As a leader (or group of leaders), determine the why for your event. Create a short summary that can be expressed in a few sentences that explains who the event is for and what it hopes to achieve  
Example: This weekend retreat will bring together all of the leadership in our organization to plan programs and discuss fundraising strategies.

### **A few important questions to consider are:**

1. How many people are you planning will attend?
2. How many volunteers/staff will you need for this event to be successful?
3. What are the most important moments of your event?

## 2. Set your dates - 10-12 months before event

When will you hold this event? Will it be better in the summer (when more people have spare time) or in the spring (when people likely are not on vacation)?

Once you settle on a final date, consider your timeline to prepare for the event and put those dates on your calendar. How much advance notice will participants need to make sure they can attend the event?

**Tip:** Start from the end (the retreat date) and work backward. Once you've decided on your timeline, **Book Your Event** with our Guest Services team.

## 3. Develop your concept - 6-8 months before event

During this time, think about how you will meet the goals of your event. Do you need to schedule a special speaker or a musician/band? Get commitments from your volunteers who will staff the event and start outlining the daily schedules.

### **A few important questions to consider are:**

1. How will you utilize free time at the event?
2. Would your event be improved with a planned recreation time?

**Tip:** Our staff has years of experience in camping ministry! If you need ideas to improve your event reach out and we will work with you to find something that works for your budget.

## 4. Promote your Event and Open Registration – 3-4 months before event

If you've created a website for the event, publish that site and share it with your intended participants. Consider a Facebook event page where your attendees can find information and ask questions. Gather information about housing needs (roommate requests, accessibility needs, etc.), and collect information from guests with special dietary needs. If you are planning any staffed recreation events, deposits are due 60 days before your arrival.

## 5. Report your needs – 3-4 weeks before event

Contact our Guest Services team to make sure that we have all the logistics information we need to make your event a success:

1. Meal counts and special diet requests
2. Meeting space setup requests
3. Rooming charts

**Tip:** Our staff works hard to accommodate every request, but late and last minute requests for are sometimes not possible to fulfill. Give them the best chance to help you by communicating your needs early!

## 6. Submit your paperwork – 2-3 weeks before event

As your arrival approaches, be sure that you have sent our Guest Services team all of these documents:

1. Signed contract
2. Proof of liability insurance for event
3. Proof of tax exemption (if applicable)
4. Final attendee lodging and meal numbers

## 7. Gather your materials – 1-2 weeks before event

Now is the time to start packing everything that you need for your time here. Maybe you have paper handouts to print and sort, nametags to assemble, or even a T-shirt order to sort. Quite often, group leaders will put together a “goodie-bag” to welcome event attendees. Giving your participants something to bring home is a powerful reminder of your event and the experience shared here.

**Tip:** Direct your group attendees to our FAQ page for a suggested packing list and other helpful information.

## 8. Final steps – Week of event

Verify with our Guest Services team when you will arrive. One of our hosts will welcome you, provide you with important information, and give you access to your meeting and lodging spaces. If you haven't done so already, print your organizational check for payment upon your arrival.

## Congratulations!

**You did it!** All the preparations are made, and now you can settle in and enjoy this beautiful space. We hope this will be a time where you and your community find growth and renewal.