

Backup Instructor

Job Title:

Backup Instructor

Summary:

Backup Instructors are a critical part of keeping camps running, and this position can be quite exciting for an Instructor who enjoys novelty and being of service. Their primary responsibility is to go wherever there is a need and fill in for Instructors who are sick or unable to make it to camp. A Backup Instructor will primarily substitute at Nature Adventure Day Camps, but may also substitute at Skill camps or during the day at Overnight camps if they have adequate training or experience.

Backup Instructors are assigned to a camp location the Thursday before each week of camp via email but may be asked to move locations at ANY time. They must therefore have reliable transportation to all or a majority of camp locations. Admin will do their best to schedule Backup Instructors close to their preferred locations but are not always able to do so. When all Instructors are present, Backup Instructors will continue to work at their assigned location, providing assistance and breaks to Instructors, Assistant Directors, and Directors as needed.

Like Nature Adventure Day Camp Instructors, Backup Instructors may be responsible for supervising and instructing a group of 10 campers for each camp week they are scheduled. Instructors work with their camp directors and each other to keep campers safe and engaged using a blend of Wilderness Awareness School curriculum, (nature connection routines, games, songs, and stories; the art of questioning; plant and animal identification and tracking; community and ecology; wandering; sensory awareness, basic survival skills; etc.) and their passions to facilitate camper connection with nature, community, and self.

This position reports to:

- Program Coordinators and Program Manager for the duration of the summer and their backup assignments
- One or multiple Camp Directors and Assistant Directors throughout the week.

Pay:

- First Year Staff - \$820 per week (equivalent to \$20.50 per hour)
- Second Year Staff - \$840 per week (equivalent to \$21.00 per hour)
- Third+ Year Staff - \$860 per week (equivalent to \$21.50 per hour)

- Backup Instructors may apply for travel stipends for commuting to camp locations 20+ miles away from home.

Work Hours:

- This is a seasonal position, working Monday to Friday, 8:00 am to 4:00 pm daily. You will work and be paid, even if all Instructors are present.
- Backup Instructors must pay extra attention to their email and phone on Sunday afternoon and each morning to ensure that they are traveling to the correct camp and are in contact with the correct Camp Director.
- Planning Week: Training hours determined by positions worked and will be a variety of in-person and/or online (*Dates on Application*)
- Staff Training Week: Mandatory paid training for all staff. Our training will be held at our Duvall campus. Camping overnight is not mandatory, but HIGHLY encouraged. (*Dates on Application*)

Duties and Responsibilities

- Substitute instruct for Instructors who are sick or unable to make it to camp (This will primarily be Nature Adventure Day Camp, but may also include Skill camps or day shifts at Overnight camps with adequate training or experience.)
- Provide assistance and breaks to Instructors, Assistant Directors, and Directors if all Instructors are present
- Show up as promptly as possible to a camp location as assigned by email, phone, or text notification, and be prepared to move to another camp location as needed.
- Communicate with the Instructor you are replacing if possible and with the Camp Director about the needs and history of your group, and communicate similar details back to the primary Instructor and Camp Director if you are assigned elsewhere
- Be prepared to supervise up to 10 campers ages 6-13 at a time in a public park with minimal support from a team member or supervisor
- Communicate with the camp Director and parents/guardians promptly about accidents, injuries, illness, DEI incidents, and the emotional well-being of campers
- Mentor a volunteer age 13+ in WAS curriculum and leadership development, and provide written and verbal feedback
- Use a combination of Wilderness Awareness School curriculum and activities and your talents to spark camper passion, curiosity, and gifts, and create connections for campers with nature, self, and community.

- Work with a team of instructors and directors to lead activities such as songs, games, and stories for up to 60 campers
- Work with your camp directors and mentors to monitor and develop your own instructing and mentoring abilities in a culture of feedback
- Uphold Wilderness Awareness School's mission and policies

Physical Requirements

- This is a physically demanding job and instructors must be able to be on their feet for 6+ hours at a time, walk long distances, move over uneven terrain, carry their gear (water bottle, lunch, snack, clothing layers, first aid kit, radio, bandana ball, additional activity supplies), and be out in the elements without shelter all day.
- Instructors should be extremely aware of their own physical needs as well as the physical needs of their campers, and be able to make adjustments to their day based on this information. This includes but is not limited to checking water consumption, adjusting lunch/snack times, taking shade breaks, and adjusting hike distances and activity types.
- Caring for the physical, emotional, and mental needs of oneself and a group of young people can be taxing. Successful instructors protect themselves against burnout by tending to their own physical, emotional, and mental health both inside AND outside of camp hours. At camp, this includes asking for help, taking breaks when given, practicing emotional regulation, cultivating grit and resilience, and modeling this for campers. At home, this can look like many things but often involves a healthy amount of rest.

Qualifications and Expectations:

- Able to pass a background check
- Backup Instructors MUST have their own reliable transportation and MUST be able to reliably arrive early/on time to various camp locations in the Seattle area, many of which aren't accessible by public transportation. You will NOT be able to carpool with other staff while you are a Backup Instructor, as you will need to be able to come and go freely between all/a majority of camp locations. (You will be able to state location preferences on your application, and you may apply for travel stipends for commuting to camp locations 20+ miles away from home.)
- Backup Instructors MUST be able to reliably receive email, phone calls, voicemail, and text messages from supervisors and teammates, and access and make use of online camp resources
- Experience working with children in a professional or volunteer capacity, and a desire to build upon this experience

- Current Wilderness First Aid and CPR certifications (or able to acquire before the first day of camp). Wilderness Awareness School hosts these trainings will be presented by Remote Medical Training and offered to staff at cost (\$295). (*Dates in Application*)
- Minimum age of 18* by the start of Summer. (*We will consider 17-year-old applicants who are highly skilled and have experience working with youth.)
- Able to work at least 5 of the 9 weeks of camps, in addition to a week of Staff Training.
- Must demonstrate good judgment and risk assessment
- Be a professional adult: operate with responsibility and integrity
- Creativity and passion for mentoring youth in a natural flow learning environment with an open and flexible structure
- A commitment to developing your capacity with conversations around justice and equity as well as cultivating a welcoming and inclusive space for all.
- Strong ability to work as a contributing member of a team, able to bring your unique voice, gifts, and contributions to a relational work setting
- Willing to participate in a healthy feedback culture, providing and receiving feedback from volunteers, peers, and leadership
- Empathy, compassion, and an open mind

Preference will be given to applicants who:

- Work well on a team
- Value novelty and excitement
- Demonstrate independence
- Are great at picking up on group dynamics quickly
- Have previous WAS camp experience
- Meet all Day Camp Requirements

Sick Time and Backup Instructors

- Seasonal Instructors accrue sick time hours at a rate of 1 PSSL hour per 40 hours worked. These hours are not paid out at the end of the summer but can be rolled over from one summer to another.
- In practice, this means that new Instructors may earn up to 10 paid hours of sick time by the end of the summer and that returning Instructors may have up to 10 paid hours available to use on day 1. Sick days outside of this, unfortunately, can not be compensated.
- As a Backup Instructor, it will be your responsibility to take the place of other Instructors when they are ill.
- If an Instructor falls ill over the weekend before their shift or is otherwise unavailable Monday morning, you will be called to take their place for the rest of

the week, as our campers must have consistency in their Instructors. If the Instructor recovers mid-week, they will first be given the option to become a Backup Instructor and replace someone else. If this is truly impossible for them, we will do our best to arrange for them to take over the group so you can travel where they are needed.

- If an Instructor falls ill mid-week, you may be called in to take their place, but they will remain the primary instructor and may relieve you later in the week if possible.
- If YOU fall ill during your Backup Instructor week, you will need to communicate this to the Program Coordinator and Director whose camp you have been assigned to. They will check in with you throughout the week, and if you can return to camp they will appoint you where you are most needed.

Benefits

- Paid training and mentoring in the Coyote Mentoring method and the 8 Shields Model by leaders in the field
- Discounts on Wilderness Awareness School bookstore items
- The option to apply for employee housing on our land in Duvall, WA, at significantly reduced rates for the area
- Weekly verbal and written feedback on your growth as a Nature Instructor, contributing to a potential professional reference at the end of the season
- Be a part of an amazing team of passionate people doing important work