

# BEST PRACTICES

## Concerning the Arrest of International Staff

*\*Developed by Richard Atkins, Esq.*

*Shared in partnership of International Cultural Exchange Organizations*

It is common for camps to disassociate themselves from international staff who are arrested during their employment at camp. Camps should not, however, abandon the individual entirely. For one, the person may indeed be innocent. Secondly, we all have an obligation to the health and welfare of everyone that we hire from overseas. Further, you want to minimize potentially serious negative repercussions for the employee and the camp.

### Pre-Camp

1. Try to have a pre-arrangement with an assistance service that can give legal consultation (e.g., insurance company, attorney).

### Upon Arrest

1. Provide as much support as practical – help the person who is charged determine what to do concerning defense counsel. For example, do they have the resources to hire an attorney, or is a public defender their only recourse? International staff are almost certain to be unfamiliar with the United States legal system. Start with local police, court officer or clerk who will direct you to the public defender's office number. Better yet have the number on hand in advance.
2. Find out all relevant information (e.g., the jurisdiction in which the arrest occurred) as procedures can differ widely by municipality, county, or state.
3. Contact your international placement agency right away. The agency may decide to consult with parents who may be able to help in providing private counsel and provide other support.
4. If you need to remove the participant from camp, assist in finding long-term accommodation. Look into the situation carefully, especially if the participant has plans to leave the jurisdiction. The participant should behave prudently, and no one wants to be accused of obstructing justice.
5. It is best to provide a minimal amount of support in conjunction with the family to ensure that the individual has a place to stay and enough resources until the trial date. In relatively minor situations there have been cases where local people associated with the camp, and friendly with the participant who is charged, have assisted with accommodation.
6. It's always best to try to deal with the problem in the most humane manner. Listen to the participant, and remember that they may not be guilty. It is perfectly fine to talk about the case without fear of subpoena or other legal exposure. Weigh everything carefully before making the decision to terminate the person.

### In Cases of Child Protection Allegations

1. Follow state laws and industry guidelines concerning reportable offenses.

2. Immediately consult with your legal counsel. It may be worthwhile to consider referring immediate short-term legal assistance to the accused from an attorney that is not associated with the camp. The participant should not be left without counsel with any investigatory body.
3. Contact your placement agency immediately.

*Advice provided by:  
Richard Atkins, Esq.  
International Legal Defense  
1429 Walnut St.  
Philadelphia PA 19102*

*\* International Cultural Exchange Agencies participating in the development of these Best Practices  
BUNAC/Summer Camp USA  
Camp America  
Camp Leaders  
CCUSA – Camp Counselors USA  
Cultural Homestay International – Camp Adventure USA  
InterExchange Camp USA  
International Counselor Exchange Program  
International YMCA ICCP  
Jewish Community Centers Association of North America*

