MONTGOMERY CENTER

Camp Conference Retreat

Guest Group Guidelines

Our Mission of hospitality is to welcome all people to experience Christ and creation in ways that deepen faith and strengthen relationships.

88 SE 75th St. Starke, FL 32091 (352) 473-4516 www.montgomerycenter.org

We are glad you have chosen Montgomery Center for your retreat!

This information guide is for the benefit of your contact person or event coordinator. Each group leader is responsible for you and your group maintaining these policies.

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Guest Preparation

Final Numbers:

- ☐ Check your Agreement.
- ☐ Compare your schedule, activities, and registrations to what you reserved.
- ☐ Email finalized program schedule to office@montgomerycenter.org to ensure staffing at scheduled activities and meals.
- ☐ Contact Montgomery at least 2 weeks prior to your event to report your final numbers. This allows Montgomery to finalize dietary, lodging, and program needs. *(These numbers will reflect the minimum amount on your final bill.)*
- ☐ Prepare Group Roster: Every group is responsible for providing a group roster to Montgomery with a list of names for anyone that is on site in case of an emergency. A sample roster is available: Roster for Montgomery Center

Special Request & Rental Items:

- ☐ Easel pads, firewood, AV equipment, etc. must be requested in advance.
- ☐ Group will inform MC of any special activities or equipment being used prior to the event. (i.e., bands, caterers, cotton candy machines, bounce houses, slides, etc.). Upon request, vendors must submit a certificate of insurance.

What To Bring: Here's a handy checklist to help people in the packing process. A recommended packing list is also available on our website at montgomerycenter.org/retreats

- Water bottle
- Close-toed shoes
- Comfortable, casual clothing
- Toiletries
- Washcloth and Towel
- Bedding (twin, if staying in lodges/cabins)
- Swimsuit and towel (if swimming)
- Bug spray
- Sunscreen

What NOT to bring:

- Illegal substances
- Weapons of any kind (including firearms, knives, fireworks, or explosives)
- Alcohol (unless approved in advance by Montgomery staff, with a waiver on file)
- Tobacco, vaping devices, or smoking materials (except in designated areas, if applicable)

- Pets or animals (except approved service animals)
- Valuables or irreplaceable items (we are not responsible for lost or stolen belongings)
- Candles, incense, or open flames (due to fire safety regulations)
- Outside food or catering equipment (unless coordinated in advance)
- Amplified sound equipment or instruments (unless approved)
- Drones or unauthorized recording equipment
- Items that may damage facilities or the natural environment

If you're unsure about an item, please contact us in advance—we're happy to help you plan for a great experience.

Guest Group Violations:

Guest groups or individual guests who violate these policies may be subject to:

- Immediate removal of the prohibited item
- Removal of individuals or the entire group from camp property without refund for serious violations
- Forfeiture of all or part of the security deposit
- Charges for damages, cleanup, or additional staffing costs
- Loss of eligibility for future facility rentals
- Referral to law enforcement when required by law or when safety is threatened

Camp Authority: The camp reserves the right to require the removal of any person, vehicle, or item that is determined to pose a safety risk, violate camp policies, interfere with camp operations, or jeopardize the well-being of campers, guests, staff, or property.

Linens:

- ☐ Cabins/Lodges: Guest groups should bring their own twin size bedding and towels.
- ☐ Inn Rooms: All linens included. *Towel changes are available for groups staying four nights or more.*
- ☐ **Linen Rentals:** $15 per set. (includes sheet set, blanket, pillow, towel & wash cloth)

Waivers: Print, disseminate and collect signed waivers to be turned in to your Montgomery host at check in. Waiver form is available at the end of this document.

Camp Safety

Emergency Training and Reporting Policy: Guest groups will receive information on:

- Emergency procedures
- Evacuation and shelter locations
- Emergency communication
- Reporting emergencies or unsafe conditions

Guest group leaders are responsible for sharing this information with their participants.

Emergency Reporting

Staff and guest groups must immediately report:

- Injuries or medical emergencies
- Fires
- Missing persons
- Severe weather hazards
- Unsafe conditions

In life-threatening emergencies, call **911** first, then notify camp leadership.

Incident Documentation

All emergencies and significant incidents must be documented using the camp's Incident Report Form as soon as possible.

Compliance

Failure to follow emergency procedures or reporting requirements may result in disciplinary action for staff or removal of guest groups from camp property.

First Aid:
Groups are required to provide basic first aid supplies for their participants. It is recommended that the guest group provide adults with age-appropriate CPR and First Aid Certification to accompany their group. Montgomery Center does not provide emergency transportation. Please call 911 for emergencies, then contact your host. It is recommended that guest groups bringing minors without their parent/guardians attending, obtain medical release forms for said minors.

Child/Youth Protection:
To help protect all participants, we recommend that guest groups screen youth-serving staff, provide youth protection training for staff and volunteers. Best practices include maintaining

appropriate supervision ratios and avoiding one-on-one, out-of-sight interactions between adults and minors.

Groups are responsible for implementing and enforcing their own child protection policies while on site.

Counselors: *If you are bringing a group of children or youth younger than 18 years of age, it is necessary to provide qualified counselors*. Counselors should be at least five years older than the oldest child they counsel.

The minimum adult to children ratios for are as follows:

Camper Age	Counselor to Camper Ratio Overnight	Counselor to Camper Ratio Day-Only
<5	**1:5**	**1:6**
6-8	**1:6**	**1:8**
9-14	**1:8**	**1:10**
15-18	**1:10**	**1:12**

Food Service

We are committed to welcoming all campers and guests, including those with dietary needs. We will make every reasonable effort to provide safe, nutritious, and satisfying meals for all participants.

The following needs are typically met within our standard menu planning:

- Vegetarian (non-vegan)
- No pork or no beef
- Minor preferences (e.g., no mushrooms, sauce on the side)

The following diets require advance notice and may involve an additional fee due to increased food cost, preparation time, and safety protocols:

- Gluten-free
- Food allergies (including peanut, tree nut, dairy, egg, soy, etc.)
- Dairy-free
- Vegan
- Medically necessary diets (e.g., low-FODMAP, diabetic-specific)
- Religious dietary requirements (Halal, Kosher*)
  *Note: Kosher meals may be sourced from certified external vendors when required.

To cover the real costs of specialized ingredients, additional labor, and safe preparation practices, the following fees apply:

- Standard Special Diet (e.g., gluten-free, dairy-free, vegan):
  $1–$3 per person per meal
- Allergy-Safe or Medically Complex Diets (requiring individualized preparation and strict cross-contamination protocols):
  $1–$5 per person per meal
- Kosher or Highly Specialized Sourced Meals:
  Priced based on vendor cost (typically $3–$5 per person per meal)

Special diet meals are designed to be **nutritionally comparable**, though they may differ from the main menu. In some cases, meals may be **simplified** to ensure safety and consistency. We cannot guarantee an entirely allergen-free facility, but we follow strict procedures to reduce risk.

- ☐ Food allergy list must be submitted to office@montgomerycenter.org 2 weeks prior to arrival. Late requests may not be accommodated or may incur additional fees. *We may contact you for clarification to ensure safety and accuracy.*
- ☐ For highly complex medical diets or severe, life-threatening allergies, we may ask participants to bring supplemental food. In these cases:
  - We will provide refrigeration and reheating access
  - Special diet fees may be reduced or waived.

We believe the table is a place of belonging. These policies help us prepare thoughtfully so that every person can participate fully, safely, and joyfully.

Check In:

Upon arrival: Your event coordinator or contact person should check in at the Montgomery office before any registered guests. Your group will provide a registrar to handle all registration and room assignments. Montgomery Center will provide a staff member to serve as an on-site host. Standard check in time is 2:00 PM; check out time is 10:00 AM. If you are checking out over the weekend, deposit your keys in the drop box located outside the main office prior to your departure.

The following items will be provided to you at check in:

1. Host information
2. Map of the grounds
3. Keys, if available
4. Emergency Information
5. Review of any special information related to your event (including activities)

Please be prepared to provide:

1. Your contact information in case of emergency

2. Printed group roster
3. Printed & signed waivers
4. A check for the contracted amount balance due

- **Payment:** Your Final Invoice is based upon the numbers given 2-weeks prior to your arrival. This is your minimum balance due. Adjustments will be made to your Final Invoice based on your final group roster and other last minute accommodations. **Failure to pay any remaining balance within 30 days may result in late fees applied to your account. Future reservations may be placed on hold until payment is received.**

General User Responsibility:

Parking: All guests need to park in the main parking lot. Guests can **not** drive to the cabins. Gregory & Williams Lodges can accommodate some parking.

Car Charging: Need to charge your electric vehicle during your stay at Montgomery? Please see the front office. Charging is available on site for a $20 fee, payable by check, cash or card.

Pets: Please contact the office regarding pets on property. No pets are allowed in the Inn rooms.

Quiet Hours: Please remember that other groups and residents may be sharing the site. Quiet hours are from 10:00 PM to 7:00 AM.

Smoking: Smoking is only permitted outside, away from other guests in designated smoking areas. **Smoking is not allowed in any building, including bathrooms.** Please safely dispose of all cigarette butts as they should not be left on the grounds.

Drugs or weapons: Weapons and banned substances are not allowed on Montgomery grounds.

Alcoholic Beverages: Alcoholic beverages should only be served if Montgomery Center has a copy of our Alcohol Policy signed by your group leader. To obtain a copy of the policy please contact the office.

Medication Storage- We recommend that medication and prescription (both prescription and over the counter) be stored under lock except when in the controlled possession of the person responsible for administering them.

Toxic or flammable materials and power tools: Unless advance permission is obtained from Montgomery for a specific purpose, these items should not be on the grounds. This includes fireworks.

Bounce Houses: Bounce houses are permitted with prior approval and coordination with Montgomery staff. Bounce houses will incur a $50 additional fee to cover electricity, wear and tear, and staff assistance.

Dress Code: We strongly recommend footwear be worn at all times due to hazards including snakes. Footwear, shirts and shorts must be worn in the dining room – no exceptions. The dress code at Montgomery Center is comfortable and casual.

Trash: Please be considerate of our property and dispose of any trash in the wooden trash bins located around the property. At the end of your stay please put any trash from your cabin or lodge in outdoor wooden trash bins. If you have a large amount of trash, the dumpster is accessible on the main road at the top of the hill.

During Your Event:

Meeting Rooms: Use of meeting rooms is only permitted if the room has been reserved by your group in advance. **Your group is subject to additional rental fees if meeting spaces being used are not in your original contract.** All activities in the meeting rooms require adult supervision.

Audio Video Equipment: LCD Projector and Projection Screen rentals are available. Groups will need to provide their own adaptors (i.e. HDMI adaptor, etc.) Groups will be charged $25.00 If you need this equipment please contact the Montgomery office prior to your event to ensure availability.

Easel Stand, Paper & Markers: Easel stands, paper & markers are available. Groups will be charged $20.00 for this service. If you need this equipment please contact the Montgomery office prior to your event to ensure availability.

Wi-fi: Guest wi-fi is available in the Weller Dining Hall, the Fireplace Conference Room, the Inn Conference Room, Inn Rooms and Williams Lodge. No password required.

Copies: Your host can make copies for you. ($.10 per page, $.20 per color page, $5.00 min.)

Outgoing mail: Outgoing mail may be brought to the office before 11 am Monday - Friday.

Meals: Meals are served promptly at the times listed below (unless otherwise scheduled in advance). *Food remains on the serving line for 30 minutes. Please plan to arrive at the meal times to ensure fresh food.*

Breakfast	8:00 am
Lunch	12:30 pm
Dinner	6:00 pm

Food Safety When Cooking Your Own Meals- Food safety guidelines are hanging in each lodge kitchen, and can be provided before arrival upon request. Please use proper food safety at all times!

Ice: An ice machine is available to guests in the Fireplace Conference Room alcove. Please only use the ice scoop available on top of the machine, and store it above the machine.

Buildings & Grounds:

1. Notify the staff or host about problems promptly. We will fix them as soon as possible.

2. DO NOT make permanent alterations to buildings and structures. DO NOT purposefully modify, deface, damage, or destroy MC facilities or equipment. Group will remove all non-permanent decorations & signs at the conclusion of the event.

3. Please don't move pianos. Notify staff or host for assistance.

4. **Dining hall:** DO NOT adjust temperature, ask kitchen staff for assistance. All four of our units must remain in sync.

5. Please protect the natural environment, including plants and wildlife, especially our endangered Gopher Tortoise.

6. Montgomery maintenance equipment shall not be used without permission. (i.e. ladders, vehicles, etc)

7. Sliding glass doors in the dining hall should remain closed.

8. Cabin doors do not latch well. Please remind your group to pull them closed.

9. Please help us conserve energy! Temperature control units in lodging are best kept at a neutral temperature throughout the day to preserve the life span of the unit.

10. Our toilets are old. Please hold the handles down while flushing to avoid clogging.

11. Please stay off of all challenge course areas without a facilitator present.

Activities:

Activities: Activities that are arranged through the office prior to your stay are dependent on weather conditions and facilitator availability. Our program staff will do their best to ensure activities will run if at all possible. If your activities are canceled due to weather or unforeseen circumstances, a refund may be provided upon request, or applied to your next visit. If a refund is not requested within 2 weeks of your canceled activity, the activity fee will be considered a donation to the ministry. While planning your retreat you must coordinate with our Program Director to build your activity schedule. Participant numbers and activities will influence needed time blocks. Please be mindful of activity start times. If your group is running more than 15 minutes late we may not be able to accommodate all participants within the scheduled time block. *Use of the Challenge Courses and the Archery Range is strictly prohibited without trained staff facilitation.*

Watercraft Activities: Guest groups conducting watercraft activities are strongly advised to provide a qualified instructor with documented training, certification, or experience specific to the activity being taught. This includes canoeing, kayaking, rowing, sailing, waterskiing, and similar activities.

If the instructor is not also qualified to supervise aquatic safety, the group is also advised to provide a separate, properly qualified lifeguard or water-safety staff member. Documentation of certifications or relevant experience must be provided to camp management upon request.

The camp may provide qualified instructional and aquatic safety staff for an additional fee, subject to staff availability and advance arrangements.

Recreation Equipment: Eppert Pavilion is stocked with general recreation equipment such as soccer balls, basketballs, hula hoops, four square and gaga ball. If you plan to bring your own equipment please put your name on it. Ping pong is available on the dining hall porch.

Swimming: is not allowed without a lifeguard, unless you have a signed waiver on file with Montgomery Center. Swimming is allowed from sunrise to sunset. No Glass allowed at waterfronts.

Canoes: are available on Little Crystal Lake. All participants must wear a PFD (lifejacket). Two people minimum required with adult supervision. No Glass allowed at waterfronts.

Fishing: is allowed in all lakes. Please do not feed the fish from the dock on Emerald Lake or in the roped off swimming areas. The fish in our lakes are predominantly bass and bream. No Glass allowed at waterfronts.

The Labyrinth: is a walking path that leads toward the center. Individuals or groups can use it as a tool for spiritual growth.

The Overlook: is an outdoor chapel overlooking Big Crystal Lake. It can be used for meditation or an outdoor worship service. It is also great for a sunrise service and weddings.

Lost and Found Items: Please contact the office for items left behind after your stay. Montgomery will keep lost and found items for up to 2 weeks.

Fires: Report a fire by notifying the first Montgomery employee you can find. If a staff member is not readily available, call 911.

Fire Dangers: Fire is a constant danger to Montgomery. All guests are expected to comply with the fire procedures.

The following are important reminders:

1. Campfires are not permitted without prior authorization.
2. Be sure that campfires are completely out before leaving the area. If it is cold enough to put your hand in it, it is safe to leave.
3. Our main fire pit has a water hose. Water coolers or buckets can be requested at other campfire locations.

Do Not Use: the indoor fireplaces in Gregory Lodge and the Fireplace Conference Room. These are no longer functioning fireplaces.

Camp Store

While you are here feel free to browse Montgomery's Camp Store that is filled with camp souvenirs, snacks/drinks and trinkets. We have assorted items from buttons for $.50 to hoodies for $38.

Times vary depending on the season. Please contact your host for specific store times.

Departure Check-List:

- ☐ **Check out is at 10am.** Please help us with the transition time between groups by vacating lodging at the agreed upon time in your contract.

- ☐ **Trash:** Please remove trash from your cabins and lodges and place it in the wooden receptacles around camp or in the dumpster. Gregory and Williams Lodge guests should remove trash from lodges and place it in the dumpster on the main camp road.

- ☐ **Appreciated but not required:**
  - ☐ **Dining Hall:** please stack chairs 7 high.
  - ☐ **Fireplace Conference Room:** do not stack chairs
  - ☐ **Inn Conference Room:** please stack chairs 5 high
  - ☐ **Gregory & Williams Lodge:** please stack chairs 5 high

- ☐ **Damages:** Leaders should check all used areas and lodging before departure to be sure there is no damage or graffiti left by your group. Damages will be assessed and may be added to a group's final bill. MC is not responsible for loss or damage to personal property or vehicles at the facility.

- ☐ **Evaluations & Keys:**Turn in the evaluation form provided by your host upon check in. You may drop it in the drop box located at the front office along with your room keys.

- ☐ **Have a safe drive home!**

Questions? Feel free to give us a call at (352) 473-4516

Thank you for choosing Montgomery Center.

We look forward to serving you!

MONTGOMERY CENTER
EST. 1957

Montgomery Center serves people of all ethnic, cultural, economic, and religious backgrounds including the physically challenged. Unless your group has paid for exclusive use of the facility, you will be sharing the grounds, recreation facilities, and the dining room with other guest groups. It is important that groups treat each other with respect and courtesy to help ensure a meaningful conference experience for all concerned.

Acknowledgement of Risks, Assumption of Risk and Responsibility, and Release of Liability

Acknowledgement of Risks: I realize that there are inherent dangers in any outdoor activity that may be offered at Montgomery Presbyterian Conference Center, Inc ("Montgomery Center"), with or without a facilitator. These activities may include, but are not limited to, swimming, climbing, hiking, challenge courses, campfires, fishing, boating, tubing, and archery. These activities may involve hazards including, but not limited to, the following: 1) Rough terrain; 2) Fire hazards including embers and smoke inhalation; 3) An "Act of Nature," which may include tree falling, rock falling, inclement weather, thunder and lightning, severe and/or varied wind, temperature or weather conditions; 4) Hot and cold weather conditions including heat exhaustion, heat stroke, and hypothermia; 5) Travel to and from the activity by foot through wooded areas and strenuous terrain where poison ivy, oak, and sumac; stinging bees and wasps; poisonous snakes; and other plants and wildlife are sometimes or often found; 6) Falling, diving, swimming, or floating in a lake where there are no lifeguards present to rescue me/us from further injury or drowning; 7) Personal property may be lost or damaged.

I also realize that risks and dangers may be caused by the negligence of the owners, employees, officers, or agents of Montgomery Center, or the negligence of participants or others, and that risks and dangers may arise from foreseeable and unforeseeable causes, including, but not limited to, a facilitator's ability to make decisions or judge terrain, weather, trail, or water conditions, or the risks of falling on challenge courses, or the risks of falling out, turning over, or drowning while boating. I fully understand that the aforementioned risks, dangers, and hazards are integral to recreational activities taking place in an outdoor environment, and that wearing a U.S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation device is an important safety precaution for water activities.

Express Assumption of Risk and Responsibility: In recognition of the inherent risks of the activities which I and any minor children for whom I am responsible will engage in, I confirm that I am (we are) physically and mentally capable of participating in the activity and using the equipment, and I/we choose to participate in spite of the risk. I/we participate willingly and voluntarily and assume full responsibility for any losses or damages, whether caused in whole or in part by the negligence of owners, agents, officers, or employees of Montgomery Center, or any other person. These losses and/or damages include but are not limited to, sprains, torn muscles and/or ligaments, fractured or broken bones, eye damage, cuts, wounds, scrapes, abrasion, and/or contusions, dehydration, drowning, oxygen shortage, exposure, head, neck, and/or spinal injuries, animal bite or attack, insect bite, allergic reactions, shock, paralysis, or death.

Authorization: I/we hereby authorize any medical treatment deemed necessary for any injury incurred while participating.

Expenses: I/we have appropriate insurance or, in its absence, agree to pay all costs of rescue and/or medical services as may be incurred on my/our behalf.

Release of Liability: In consideration of services and equipment provided, I, for myself and any minor children for which I am parent, legal guardian, or otherwise responsible, any heirs, personal representatives, or assigns, do hereby release, waive, discharge, hold harmless, and indemnify Montgomery Center, and its owners, officers, and employees from any and all claims, actions or losses for bodily injury, property damage, wrongful death, or otherwise which may arise out of my/our use of equipment or my/our participation in any of the aforementioned activities. I specifically understand that I am releasing, discharging, and waiving any claims or actions that I/we may have presently or in the future for the negligent acts or other conduct by the owners, officers, or employers of Montgomery Center.

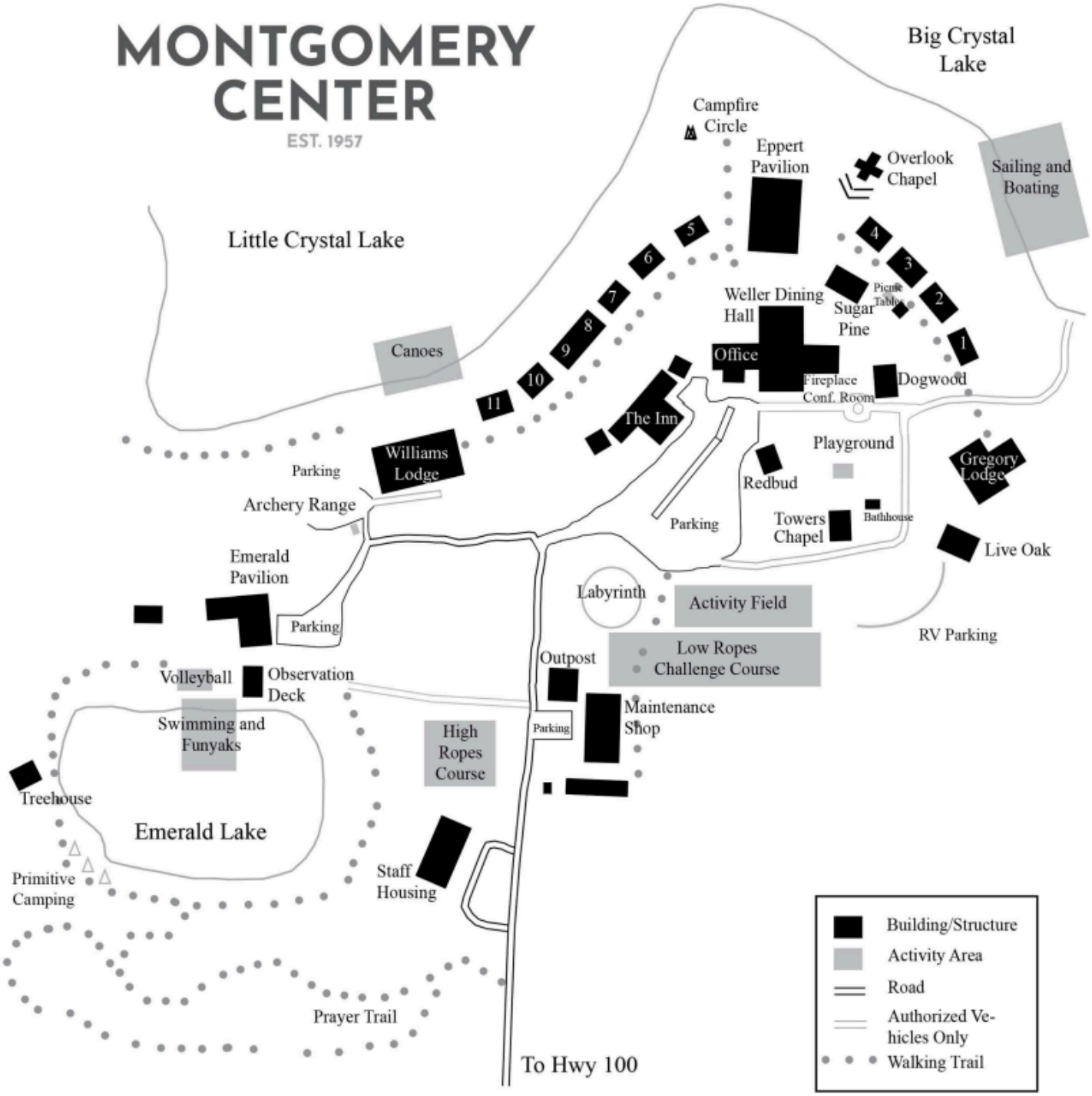
My signature below on this date and subsequent dates indicate that I have read and understand this document, acknowledge that it affects my/our legal rights, and agree to be bound by its terms. My signature also signifies my intention to exempt and relieve Montgomery Center, its owners, officers, and employers from any liability for personal injury, property damage, or wrongful death caused by negligence or any other cause.

Print Name of Minor Participant(s): _____

Signature _____ Print Name: _____ Date: _____
Parent or Guardian Signing for Minor Under 18

Signature _____ Print Name: _____ Date: _____
Adult Participant

Signature _____ Print Name: _____ Date: _____
Adult Participant

MONTGOMERY CENTER

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