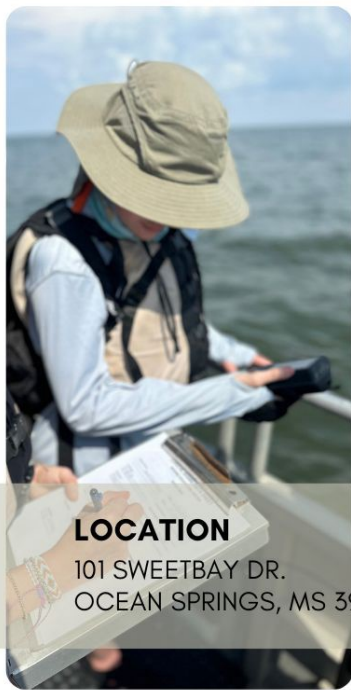
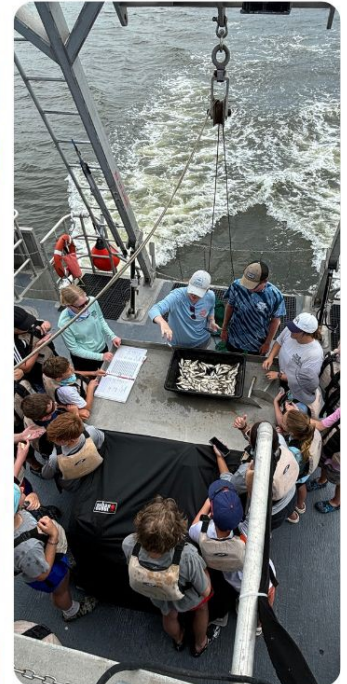


USM MARINE EDUCATION CENTER

SUMMER 2025

# ADVENTURE CAMP

PARENT HANDBOOK



## LOCATION

101 SWEETBAY DR.  
OCEAN SPRINGS, MS 39654



## CONTACT US

MARINE.EDUCATION@USM.EDU  
228.818.8095

## **Thank you for registering your student for camp this summer!**

All of our Adventure Camps are educational day camps sponsored by The University of Southern Mississippi's (USM) Marine Education Center (MEC). The MEC is the education and outreach extension of USM's School of Ocean Science and Engineering (SOSE) and Gulf Coast Research Laboratory. We know that your student will enjoy learning about our local ecosystems and gain new experiences.

Here are a few points of information that you need to know prior to your camp experience.

### **Facility Location and Contact Information**

Camp is located on USM's Cedar Point site at 101 Sweetbay Drive, Ocean Springs, MS 39564. The facility's phone number is (228) 818-8095 and hours of operation are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

### **Registration**

Students are to arrive Monday morning between 7:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. Parents and children will gather in the MEC Exhibit for registration. The Exhibit hall<sup>1</sup> can be accessed from the designated parking areas. Camp instructors are available to answer any questions, comments, or concerns with parents and children during Monday morning sign-in.

### **Tuition**

Tuition includes all instructional materials, field trip transportation, admission fees, field equipment, and a t-shirt. A \$100 non-refundable pre-registration deposit is required. The deposit will be applied toward the total due. ***All fees must be paid by the first day of camp; your student will not be able to participate in the program until they are paid.***

\*please sign in your camper and leave them with the camp staff before getting in line to pay your balance.

### **Refund Policy**

Refunds for paid tuition balances will be made if requested in writing by email, or in person at the MEC administration office<sup>2</sup> according to the schedule below. If a student is registered for a camp session and becomes unable to attend, full credit can be obtained if applied to an alternate Camp session. This refund will apply only if space is available in the Camp session. Refunds in the form of a personal check may take up to eight weeks for processing. The Marine Education Centers reserves the right to grant exceptions to this stated policy in certain situations.

#### **Time of Request: Refund/Credit for Tuition Balance**

- At least 14 days before start of the requested camp session = 100% minus \$100 deposit
- 7 - 13 days before start of the requested camp session = 50% minus \$100 deposit
- Less than 6 days before start of the requested camp session = No Refunds

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<sup>1</sup> See attached map, Conference Center is location #4.

<sup>2</sup> See attached map, Administration Building and Exhibit Hall are location #2.

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## Arrival/Departure Procedures

**DROP OFF – 7:30-8:00**

**PICK UP -3:30-4:00**

**\*\*You MUST Sign your camper in and out each day.\*\***

Parents may drop off students between **7:30 a.m. - 8:00 a.m. Monday will be the only day you will need to exit your vehicle to register and sign your child in the MEC Exhibit Hall C.** You will drop your student off with an Angler Camp counselor each morning at the MEC (*for your child's safety, please make sure they are signed in/out EVERY day*).

When pulling into the Gulf Islands National Seashore property (via Highway 90) take the second left onto the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory Cedar Point campus via Laurel Oak Drive. Keep straight until you reach the gray MEC entrance sign (101 Sweetbay Drive); keep on the gravel path, moving at a slow speed until stopped by a staff member. The MEC driveway makes a loop, so please pull forward to drop off your students and return back out of the driveway towards campus.

**Please stay in your car to pick up your student(s). A staff member will be there to collect your signature.** Parent/guardian(s) will then continue around on the gravel drive, back to the main road.

If you have children in multiple camps, you may drop them off and pick them up at the same time (i.e. dropping off children in Sea Camp and Angler/Shark Camp at 8:00 a.m. and pick up at 3:00 p.m.) Please contact the *Camp Coordinator* directly to inform them of your intentions. They will need to make arrangements with the educators in both camps.

## Off-Site Transportation/Safety Policies

State owned/operated vehicles, and/or authorized automobile rentals will be utilized for scheduled field trips. Most field trips involve traveling off-campus within the coastal in-state area, by both land and sea. All vessels are Coast Guard certified and maintained.

## Meals

Students should bring a lunch and two snacks each day. **Please note that lunch is *NOT* included as part of Camp tuition.** We will be outside a majority of the time so plenty of water and hydrating sports drinks are recommended. We will provide water throughout the day. Please send your child with a reuseable water bottle. This helps us to be responsible environmental stewards by minimizing our use of disposable plastic products.

## Dress Code

T-shirts and shorts are appropriate for your student to wear. Please wear clothes that you do not mind getting dirty. We will be outside much of the time or in the laboratory with fish, dirt or other messy materials. Your student may even want to keep a spare change of clothes available during camp in case they get really wet or dirty.

Please dress modestly for camp; shorts and shirts of appropriate length should be worn at all times. Bathing suits worn under clothes are a great option to wear on boat days. One-piece bathing suits for girls and swim trunks of appropriate length for boys are recommended; all swimwear must be conservatively cut and tasteful. Shorts must be at fingertip length and no higher than mid-thigh; “short-shorts” or spandex shorts are not permitted.

***The University of Southern Mississippi’s policies mandate that closed-toed shoes be worn on all University vessels and on all University field trips (NO Chaco’s or flip-flops; Crocs are allowed only with a heel strap).*** Failure to comply with this policy will result in expulsion from the trip or activity for the day.

### **What to Bring**

Here is a list of items your student will need to bring to camp:

- Lunch
- Snacks (2)
- Drinks (We will provide water and a reusable water bottle)
- Sunscreen
- Sunglasses
- Hat
- Insect Repellent
- Camera (Optional)
- Towel
- Change of Clothes (Optional)
- Poncho or Light Rain Gear (Optional)

### **Electronics**

To ensure your student’s safety, it is vitally important they be able to clearly hear instructions given to them, particularly on boat days. We find that cell phones and iPods create a distraction that inhibits student attention. If you choose to send these devices with your student, please leave them on silent and in their bag.

Please note that the USM Marine Education Center is not responsible for electronic devices that have fallen overboard or gotten wet at the beach. We require that students restrict their use of electronic devices to lunch and designated breaks only. Should you need to reach your student throughout the day, you may contact the Marine Education Center at (228) 818-8095. Excessive use of electronics will result in confiscation of the item, to be returned to the parent at the end of the day.

### **Behavior**

Working with fish, tackle, sharks and being over water requires the full attention and complete compliance of students. Failure to comply with instructions is a safety hazard and will **NOT** be tolerated. Behavior problems will result in a call to parents, and depending on the severity of the problem, potential expulsion from camp.

### **Medication Storage/Administration**

Medication is not administered to a child without obtaining a parent/guardian’s signature on the required medication form. Camp counselors are responsible for maintaining any medications a

student may need. Tylenol/Benadryl may be administered to a child only after checking the camper's registration form. ***Parents should discuss any medication issues with counselors and/or Camp Coordinator during registration.***

### **Medical Crisis**

Should an emergency situation arise, the coordinator or the student's counselor will tend to the child while the parent is notified. If necessary, the child will be taken to the nearest hospital or clinic until the parent(s) arrive. If parent(s) are unable to be contacted, the counselor will then proceed down the emergency contact list until someone is notified. All staff members are CPR/AED/Basic First Aid certified.

### **Medical Crisis Exemptions**

If your child is exempt from medical care on religious grounds you must provide the name, address, and phone number of a certified practitioner to be contacted in the event of a medical emergency. This information must be provided prior to your child's involvement in Angler Camp.

### **Reporting Child Abuse**

The staff of the USM Marine Education Center has a legal obligation to report any suspected case of child abuse or neglect in the state of Mississippi. The Mississippi State Department of Health provides guidelines on identifying abuse and neglect. Any suspected abuse or neglect will be brought to the attention of the camp coordinator immediately.

### **Questions?**

If you have any questions regarding your upcoming Angler Camp, please contact the Marine Education Center (228) 818-8095 or [marine.education@usm.edu](mailto:marine.education@usm.edu).



# MARINE EDUCATION CENTER AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

Gulf Coast Research Laboratory  
Marine Education Center  
101 Sweetbay Drive  
Ocean Springs, MS 39564

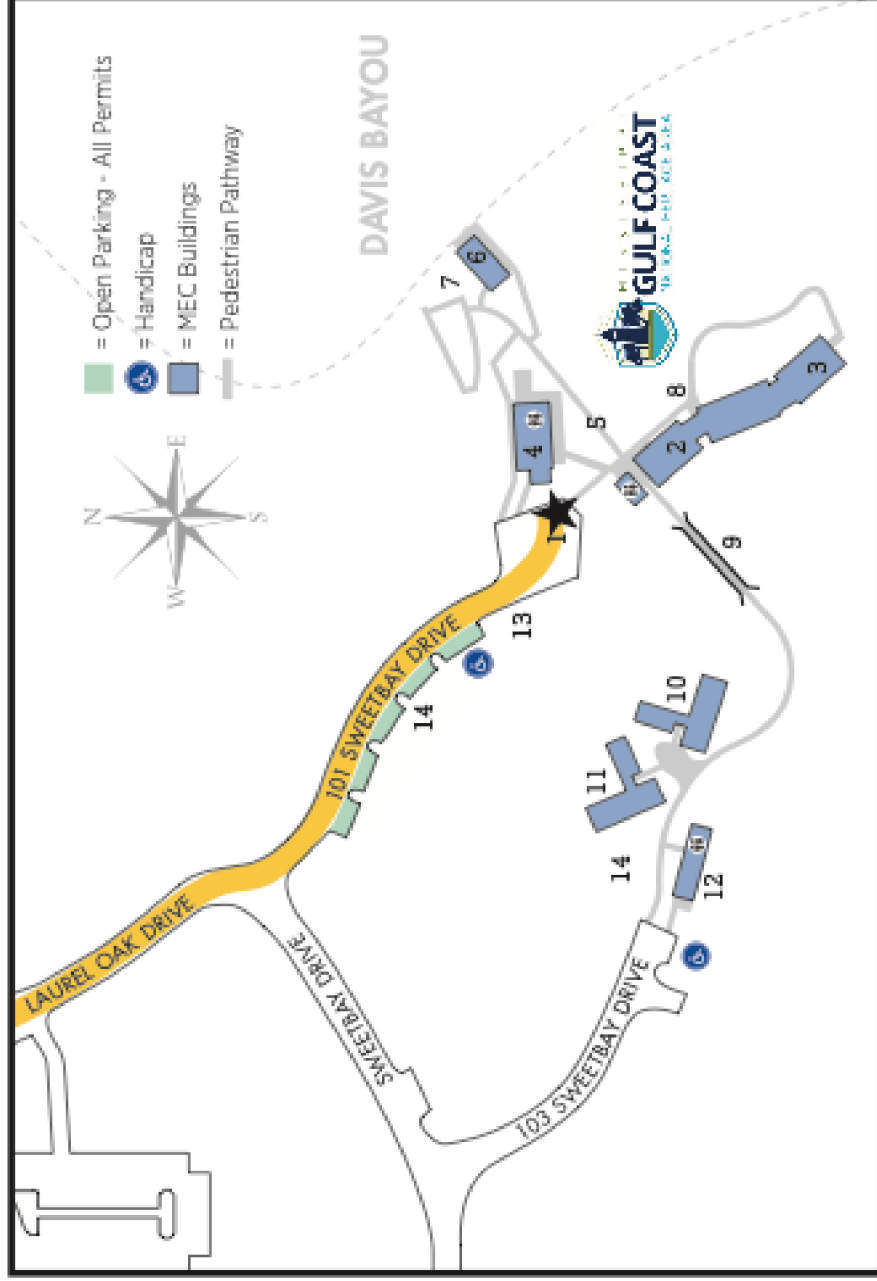
## DIRECTIONS

From Bienville Boulevard (Hwy 90) in Ocean Springs, turn south into Gulf Islands National Seashore Park. Travel on Park Road for 1.3 miles. Make a left turn onto Laurel Oak Drive. Continue to Sweetbay Drive and enter at 101 Sweetbay Drive. There is a student drop-off/turnaround at the end of drive.

For mobile map/directions, Google Maps is recommended.

For more information, contact us at [marine.education@usm.edu](mailto:marine.education@usm.edu) or 228.818.8095.

Sponsored by



- |   |                               |
|---|-------------------------------|
| 1. Student Drop-off                         | 8. Nature Trail               |
| 2. Exhibit Hall and Administrative Building | 9. Bayhead Bridge             |
| 3. Citizen Science Laboratory               | 10. MEC Education Building I  |
| 4. Conference Center                        | 11. MEC Education Building II |
| 5. Courtyard                                | 12. Showers & Restrooms       |
| 6. Pavilion                                 | 13. Bike Racks                |
| 7. Pier                                     | 14. Emergency Blue Phones     |