



# Camp Helen Brachman

## 2017 Parent and Camper Handbook

Dear Parents/Guardians and Campers,

Thank you for choosing Camp Helen Brachman for your summer camp experience. We are committed to providing a high quality experience for each camper that comes to camp through clean and safe facilities, creative, safe and progressive activities as well as a kind, strong, respectful and responsible community atmosphere. To accomplish our goals, we hire caring, passionate, creative and committed camp staff.

This handbook has been put together to help you prepare (both parents and campers) for the camp experience. Please take some time to read through the information provided, and don't hesitate to contact us with any questions about camp!

We look forward to serving your camper this summer at Camp Helen Brachman!

In the Spirit of Camping,

Camp Helen Brachman Staff

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We would like to say a huge "thank you" to all of the organizations that help us serve our campers every summer through their generous donations to Camp Helen Brachman: **The Camp Nebagamom Scholarship Fund, Camps For Kids, and the United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County.**

### CAMP NEBAGAMON SCHOLARSHIP FUND



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## **Forms We Need Back**

Whether it's your campers first time attending camp or your camper has gone many times, please read through the information provided to be sure the camp experience is positive for both you and your camper.

We have a lot of information to share with you, so let's get started!

There are a few forms we need filled out and returned to us prior to the camp session. Each of these will help us provide the best possible camp experience for your camper!

### **Health History Form -required**

The camper health history form must be completed each time you send your child to camp. This form will give camp staff the most current information about your child and their past, as well as current health. This form will be reviewed by our camp health care staff and used to ensure the best possible care for your child while at camp.

### **Health Exam Form –optional**

In the past, we have required that all campers undergo a physical checkup, and that documentation from that be provided as part of the paperwork package. We no longer require that documentation. If your camper has an ongoing medical issue requiring the regular care of a doctor, we recommend the physical form.

### **Camper Information Form - required**

The camper information form must be completed each year your child goes to camp. The form will be shared with counselors as needed to ensure that we provide the best experience for your camper! The information you provide is helpful for us in knowing your child.

### **Household Size and Income Statement (HSIS) Form - required**

The HSIS Form is required for every camper since we participate in the summer food program.

### **Parent Pick-up Authorization – required**

Pick-Up Authorization, gives permission for who may pick up your child from the bus upon their return to Milwaukee.

### **Voluntary Self I.D. Form - optional**

The Voluntary Self-Identification of Disability and Limited English Proficiency for Participants form invites you to provide any information that is relevant to you, so that we can better serve participants of our programs across COA Youth & Family Centers.



## **Preparing for camp!**

### **Preparing you, the parent or guardian for camp**

Sending your child to camp can bring up a sea of emotions and feelings! They will be different with each parent. These may change with the years in ways you don't expect! Just as the first sleep over your child has or the first day they go off to school or the first time you leave them with a sitter bring emotions, so does sending your child to camp!

### **Preparing your camper for camp**

The more you and your child prepare together for camp, the more likely your child will be to have an excellent camp experience. Here are some things you need to know!

#### **For younger or first time campers**

Start practicing daily self-care with your camper. This includes doing the following with little or no assistance.

- Brushing teeth, showering (no bathtubs at camp!), picking out clothes and dressing from top to bottom!
- Campers are expected to make their beds each day and clean up their space. This includes folding clothes, putting dirty clothes in the appropriate place and hanging wet clothes out to dry.
- Each evening there will be a cabin quiet down/closing for the day. Each camper will then have some quiet time to read and journal before its lights out. Practicing a similar bedtime routine at home is very helpful.
- In addition to practicing these routines, do talk about camp and what a camper can do if they are unsure, afraid or just need some extra TLC (let their counselor know)!

#### **For older or return Campers**

- Remind your child that there is a routine at camp and they will be expected to follow the camp guidelines with regard to lights out, bed times and wake up times.
- We want all of our kids and staff to unplug while at camp. This allows everyone to connect to each other and the larger camp community as well as enjoy the quiet of nature! This means no cell phones, iPods, or other electronic devices. Remind your camper of this so it's not a surprise when they get to camp. If they are brought to camp, we will keep them in the office for the duration of the campers stay.
- Helping your child get used to the camp routine and expectations before camp will help them have a great time while at camp!

### **Homesickness**

Homesickness is a natural and normal part of being away from home. Our staff members as well as our campers will most likely experience some level of homesickness while at camp! The following suggestions will help to minimize or prevent homesickness.

- Encourage your child's independence throughout the year. Practice separations, such as sleepovers at a friend's house, can simulate the camp environment.
- Involve your child in the process of choosing a camp. The more that the child owns the decision, the more comfortable the child will feel being at camp.
- Discuss what camp will be like before your child leaves.
- Camp Helen Brachman doesn't allow children to call home. Please do not tell you're your child they will be able to call home if they are homesick.

- Send a note or care package ahead of time to arrive the first day of camp. Acknowledge, in a positive way, that you will miss your child. For example, you can say "I am going to miss you, but I know that you will have a good time at camp."
- Don't bribe. Linking a successful stay at camp to a material object sends the wrong message. The reward should be your child's new found confidence and independence.
- Pack a personal item from home, such as a stuffed animal.
- Don't feel guilty about encouraging your child to stay at camp. For many children, camp is a first step toward independence and plays an important role in their growth & development.
- In some cases, homesickness is severe enough to warrant a child going home. If your child is experiencing homesickness that is not improving, is preventing eating or sleeping and/or not participating in activities, the camp director will contact you to discuss the best options for your child. If your child does come home, it doesn't mean that you or they have failed in anyway. It will be important to focus on the positive and encourage your child to try camp again next year.

## Departure and Return Details

### Drop off and departure

Drop off will be Sunday afternoon at the Riverwest Gym located at 909 E. Garfield Avenue. Please plan on arriving between 1:00 p.m. and 1:30 to allow enough time to check in before the bus departs at 2:00 p.m. We do suggest carpooling or parking in the COA lot off of North Avenue, if possible. If parking on Garfield Ave, please be respectful of the residents, upholding general parking terms & regulations.

### Arriving home from camp

The buses arrive back to a grassy area just east of the Pick 'n Save Parking Lot located at 1100 E. Garfield Avenue (Humbolt and North Avenue.) The actual intersection is Commerce & Dousman. (For those not familiar with the area, it is only two blocks down the street from COA's gym on Garfield where the departure check-in took place.) The buses are scheduled to arrive at 4:00 p.m. Parents can arrive 25-30 minutes early to sign their child out.

**NOTE:** Campers will stay on the bus and be let off as parents/guardians arrive and present a release ticket to the bus chaperones. We will release children only to adults named by parents or guardians on the "Pick-Up Authorization Form". Adults may be asked to show I.D. If there are changes or emergencies that will impact the bus times, we will contact parents or guardians by phone to let them know of the changes



### To prepare your camper for the bus:

- Make sure to use the bathroom before boarding the bus; it's about a 2 ½ hour trip.
- Bring a water bottle and something to read
- Please ensure that they do not have any food to bring on the bus. We can no longer allow food on the bus due to litter on the bus as well as increasing food allergies.

### Please review the Bus Rules with your camper(s):

- Campers sit facing forward while the bus is moving
- Quiet inside voices only on the bus

- Water bottles are allowed
- Keep all body parts inside the bus
- If you need something, let the bus chaperone/camp staff person know
- Pick up everything you brought with you on the bus

### **Drop Off and Check In Details**

- The first stop will be to drop off your luggage at the appropriate bus outside the Riverwest Gym. We will have staff on hand to help load luggage.
- The second stop will be inside the gym to check in at the registration table. Here we will confirm that all paperwork is complete and turned in to us. We will have extra copies of all paperwork in case you've forgotten something.
- You will then have the opportunity to meet one of our Head Counselors. Here we will talk about the behavior expectations that we have at camp.
- The last stop will be to check in with our camp health care staff. They will do a quick review of the health history form with you as well as collect and confirm all medications, dosages, administration times, allergies, etc.! We want to ensure that we've got everything covered and understand all about your child, so do please be patient if this check in station takes a bit longer!
- And finally, we do ask that parents stay with children until we are ready to load the buses. We'll do that as soon as a majority of our campers are checked in and ready to go. Each bus will be chaperoned by camp staff. Buses will arrive at camp about 5:00 p.m.

## **What happens at camp?**

Once at camp, your campers will be met by their counselors who will help them collect luggage and head off to their cabins. After settling in a bit, campers will head to the dining hall for dinner.

### **Sunday evening**

The first few hours at camp will include tours of camp, unpacking fully, playing games to get to know each other and a campfire to introduce all of the staff!

### **Monday**

The first full day at camp will be spent rotating through a number of key areas at camp. This will include spending time at the waterfront completing a swim assessment to determine their swim ability and level, a tip check in a canoe and a kayak as well as creating cabin rules and learning about KSRR – Kindness, Strength, Respect and Responsibility – the key behavior focuses at camp!



### **Swim Lessons**

After the swim assessment, campers will participate in swim lessons.

Swimming in a new environment can make some campers nervous, so we encourage you to help your camper understand that they will be safe at our waterfront and that they will gain positive skills when they participate in swim lessons. Each level as determined from swim assessments will work on different skills appropriate to their level. For example, novices may be at the end of the water on the beach, just wiggling their toes in the water, or they may venture in a bit and learn to put their face in the water and blow bubbles! Others might be working on perfecting swim strokes they already know or learning new strokes!

## **Our Goals for Campers**

### **Healthy Living at Camp**

One of our goals at camp is to implement healthy living activities and education for our campers and staff in the areas of nutrition, physical activity and stress reduction. This will include learning and participating in stretching/yoga and meditation each day, enjoying a variety of physical activities, journaling and reading as well as learning about how to make healthy food choices.



### **Literacy at Camp**

Another goal at camp is to have a positive impact on summer reading loss and enjoyment of reading and writing for our campers. We have a small library and provide journals to each camper so that during their rest time after lunch and before bed, they will have the chance to reflect and continue to improve their literacy skills while they are on summer break.

### **Campers will gain a better understanding, appreciation, and respect for people different than themselves**

Our third goal is essential to the essence of what we strive for at CHB. Our campers and staff come from diverse backgrounds and experiences, and we want everyone in the camp community to celebrate these differences. By learning from each other, appreciating what makes us different, and respecting the contributions we can all make to CHB, we can help develop our positive impact on the world outside of camp.

### **Swim Lessons**

We want all of our campers to feel comfortable in and around the water and we want them to increase their swimming skills while at camp. Each day we set aside time for this and our staff will help campers to become for comfortable in the water and improve their abilities.

### **Learning about and appreciating the outdoors and outdoor activities**

Each cabin group will have the opportunity to do: a cook out, overnight campout on CHB property or a 4 day canoe trip. Experiences progress with the age of the campers!

### **Positive Behavior**

Campers will exhibit our core characteristics of: Kindness, Strength, Respect, and Responsibility (KSRR) in all they do while at CHB. Camper behavior management will focus on recognizing positive behavior and when needed utilizing appropriate consequences for negative choices. CHB will be a safe, warm and loving place for all based on positive behavior choices by campers.



## UWCHB – Fun Classes

UWCHB is a time each day that campers individually choose which class they'd like to do. Classes are 1 hour each day and run for 3 days allowing campers to truly grow and learn in each area. Each camper experiences 2 UWCHB classes during a 13 day session. Some choices may be:

- |                  |                    |                           |
|------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| ➤ Biking         | ➤ Sports           | ➤ Fishing                 |
| ➤ Pottery        | ➤ Cooking          | ➤ Sailing (older campers) |
| ➤ Weight Lifting | ➤ GPS & Geocaching | ➤ Golf                    |
| ➤ Biking         | ➤ Gardening        | ➤ Dance                   |

*\*There will be other activity choices based on staff skills and expertise.*

## KSRR ~ Kindness, Strength, Respect and Responsibility

These 4 words are CHB's core characteristics that teach and guide how we positively live together in our camp community.

\*Putting these words into action is recognized with beads that earn special/ extra activities.

### What does KSRR look like at CHB?

- **KINDNESS**~ being nice to ourselves and others. It looks like showing appreciation, being a good friend, and helping others in our community.
- **STRENGTH**~ both mentally and physically. Mentally it looks like asking for help when needed, being brave and trying new things, and doing the right thing even when our peers aren't. Physically it looks like eating camp's balanced meals, staying hydrated and getting sleep to keep your body healthy and strong.
- **RESPECT**~ ourselves, others, and the environment. It looks like listening to the camp staff and doing what they ask of us, being a positive member in the CHB community and taking care of environment.
- **RESPONSIBILITY**~ being accountable, accepting outcomes for our own actions, being trustworthy, and behaving in a positive way. It looks like admitting when we make a mistake and learning from it.

### What if your child makes poor behavior choices?

CHB sets clear guidelines and behavior expectations for living in our camp community to ensure a safe, fun and positive experience for everyone. If campers struggle with following these guidelines our counselors work with them to improve their behavior. Camp has a **Behavior Management Plan (4C's)** that encourages and guides campers to make positive choices, while giving them time to reflect, learn, and gain skills to self-regulate. Campers are supported throughout these steps to correct negative behaviors before they become unmanageable and potentially ending their camp experience.

#### **4C's:**

1. **CHOICES:** structured alternatives
2. **CONSEQUENCES (Logical):** time away from activities to discuss and practice the behavior we need to see.
3. **CONTRACT & CALL HOME:**
  - Behavior to change...I will statements.
  - Consequence for additional offense (home)
  - Camper reads contract (they wrote) to parent
  - Camper, counselor and Camp Director signs
4. **CHECK OUT:** Camper will be sent home if the behavior does not improve, or if the behavior is so severe that the safety of your camper or other campers is a concern.

**The following behaviors will result in a camper being sent home:**

- Hurting self or others
- Physical or verbal aggression including threats
- Continuously walking/running away from staff or the group (safety issue)
- Inappropriate relationships, sexually promiscuous or harassing behavior

On Mondays at CHB, our Head Counselors will meet with each cabin group to review expectations while at camp and ensure that all campers know what their behavior means for them personally, for their cabin group, and as a part of the whole camp community!



**Cabin Clean Up & ACSP (All Camp Service Project)**

Each day, every cabin group is expected to spend some time cleaning up their cabin. We have a special award given to the cleanest cabin of the day! Also, each group is given a Camp Service Project to do. This might be watering the garden, picking up litter, feeding our camp pets, or sweeping the dining hall.

**Community Living + KSRR + CHB Goals = Community Participation**

**Cabin Activity Time**

Each day, in the morning, cabin groups go to 2 different program areas, 1 hour each. All cabins will rotate through the program areas 1-2 times per (13 day) session. Not only do the campers get to experience new and fun activities together, they will also learn decision making, communication, leadership and team work skills!

Program areas include:

<b>NATURE</b>	<b>CREATIVE ARTS</b>	<b>HEALTH &amp; FITNESS</b>	<b>ARTS &amp; CRAFTS</b>	<b>SWIMMING</b>
<b>OUTDOOR LIVING SKILLS (OLS)</b>	<b>ARCHERY</b>	<b>BOATING</b>	<b>CULTURAL EXCHANGE</b>	<b>FIELD SPORTS</b>

**Meals and Snacks**

We always serve 3 meals a day plus a snack! All of our meals and snacks meet federal food guidelines for healthy meals. Water is always out and available to campers. We strive to have kid friendly, home cooked meals that are low fat, filled with whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables and low in salt and sugar. Every lunch and dinner includes a salad bar. We serve a vegetarian option at each meal and can accommodate gluten free, vegan or other special diets. Just let us know in advance so we can be prepared.

**Bedtime and Lights Out**

This is staggered for the different ages of campers, starting at 9:15 with the youngest campers and going up until 10 pm for the older campers. We adjust bedtime earlier or later depending on special activities happening in camp or the behavior of the group (tired groups = cranky and quarrelling campers... if we see this, we'll try to get some extra sleep).



## Camp's Daily Schedule

7:00	Wake Up Bell	3:30	Waterfront Play & Swim Lessons
7:30	Morning Meditation & Stretches		½ of camp, other ½ Choice Time
7:45	Flagpole & Appreciations		(Next day switch)
8:00	Breakfast	4:45	Cabin Time
9:00	Cabin & Community Clean-up	5:15	Flagpole & Appreciations
9:30	1st Cabin Activity	5:30	Supper
10:45	2 <sup>nd</sup> Cabin Activity	6:30	All About Us
11:55	Song Circle	7:00	All Camp Evening Activity
12:15	Lunch	8:00	Bedtime Routine, starting with the youngest
1:00	UWCHB	9:15	Beginning of lights out
2:15	Rest & Reading (R&R)	10:00	All Camp lights out and....shhhhh.....zzzzz...

## Mid-Session Outdoor Activities

The middle of the session brings some fun and new adventures!

Our Teen Adventure campers will head out Friday morning for a 4 day, 3 night canoe adventure in the Northern Highland State Forest where they will enjoy beautiful lakes, great campsites and adventure. All trips will be led by trained staff members with First Aid/CPR/AED or Lifeguard certifications; at least one staff member on the trip will have a cell phone to communicate with CHB and other emergency services should the need arise. All teen participants will receive trip training leading up to their canoe adventure from CHB staff.

Each of the other cabin groups, depending on age, will do cook outs or an overnight campout on camp property.

## Themes for Camp

Each session will have its own theme that the campers will get to be a part of and do activities and games geared towards throughout the session. Campers will have the opportunity to dress up and create costumes for theme activities. If campers have anything at home that they would like to bring to wear relating to these that would be excellent!

### Session 1 –CHB Around the World in 13 Days!

Do you know how to say hello in French? How to say good morning in Lithuanian or South Korean? Have you ever spoken to someone who has swum in the Atlantic Ocean or learned how to play a traditional sport from England? This is the session to learn ALL about what life is like around the world and at home. Come, learn and appreciate what makes us all different and the same, wherever in the world we're from!

### Session 2 –CHB Outdoor Explorers

Cooking your dinner over a campfire that you built with your cabin mates will be a skill that you have down by the end of this session. Outdoor Explorers will learn all about the great outdoors and the ton of fun you can have in it! Whether it is outdoor cooking, putting up a tent, making a fire or taking a late night hike under the stars – you will leave camp with a greater love and appreciation for the outdoors than when you arrived!

### Session 3 – CHB Aqua Adventurers

Calling all water fanatics! Some may say that the best place at camp is down at the waterfront~ swimming, canoeing, kayaking and fishing...who could deny that? During this session, not only will you enjoy all things waterfront, but you'll also have extra fun with water while on land! There will be water games, a chance to create sea creatures in the art studio, learning about water safety and acting out your best impression of a whale in Creative Arts!



## Session 4 – CHB Healthy Heroes

At camp we love sports! We understand how important it is to stay physically and mentally fit & healthy so that we can play!! This session we will show you just how much fun it can be to stay healthy, try new things, and spend lots of time out at the sports field!

## Campfire and Dance

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of the session, we celebrate with a closing campfire Wednesday night and then our dance on Thursday night~!! Campers are welcome to bring a special outfit or shirt for the dance.

## Cabin Groups

Cabin group assignments are based on age and gender. Each cabin has a bathroom with a toilet and a sink. Some cabins also have a shower in it. We also have a centrally located shower house. Our goal is that campers will shower at least every other day. Cabins have bunk beds and storage areas for belongings. Each cabin group is staffed with 2 counselors.

## Our Staff

Our staff members are men and women from around the world! Many of our staff members are previous campers from Milwaukee! Some come from local areas around camp and quite a few come from different parts of the country or world. We have had staff from as far away as England, Ireland, Poland, Mexico, Columbia and the Ukraine.

All staff members go through a rigorous application and interview process as well as a background check.

In addition, we have an intensive 6 day~ all staff training prior to our campers arriving. The majority of our staff members are first aid and CPR certified.

The one thing each of our staff members has in common is their passion and desire to work with youth!



## Health and Safety

In the event that a camper becomes ill or is injured, the Health staff will administer first aid. If needed, additional treatment will be provided by the physician at a local hospital or urgent care clinic. Parents will be notified of any condition that requires a stay in the health center of 4 hours or more or off site care.

ALL medications are dispensed by the Health Director.

**Prescription medications, along with a completed Health History form, must come to camp in the original pharmacy containers, clearly labeled with the camper's name, type of medication, and current dosage.**

***Please make sure to send a quantity of prescription medication which will last the entire session.***

The Health Center has everyday type medications; they are dispensed by the Camp Health Officer in accordance with the physician's treatment procedures and the parent signed health history form.

Please do not send a child to camp who's ill or has been exposed to a communicable disease. Please check your child for lice before he or she comes to camp, as any child with lice or a communicable disease cannot stay at camp. For more information, contact the National Pediculosis Association at 617-449-NITS or [www.headlice.org](http://www.headlice.org).

### **Emergency Contacts**

Please ensure that you've listed emergency contacts that will be available while your child is at camp. Reasons we would contact you, or the emergency contacts if we can't get a hold of you, include the following:

- Homesickness that is getting worse, not better
- Conduct by your camper that is inappropriate for camp or doesn't follow our code of conduct
- Illness or injury to your child that requires a stay in the health center overnight or more than 4 hours
- Illness or injury that requires off site attention at a clinic or hospital

### **Bedwetting**

Please let us know if your camper has trouble with or a history of bed wetting on the health history and/or camper information form. This will alert us and we will be able to discreetly discuss this with your camper as well as letting them know it is okay and nothing to be ashamed of if it happens. We will discreetly change and wash all bedding and clothing if bedwetting happens at camp.

### **Weather Emergencies and Preparedness**

Weather at camp is constantly monitored via weather radios and the internet. Should severe weather threaten or happen at camp, all activities will be moved indoors and/or all campers and staff will seek shelter in our emergency weather shelters.

### **Bugs at Camp**

CHB is a beautiful wooded camp! With that come bugs ☺ ticks and mosquitoes are the most common. Please do not send aerosol repellants to camp. Instead, send lotions that can be applied to exposed skin. We'll talk to campers about checking for ticks each day. We will let you know if your child is bitten by a tick. If your child experiences any flu like symptoms after returning from camp, do let your health care provider know that they were at camp in Central Wisconsin.



## Mail

Kids love to receive mail from home! Plan on mailing a letter the first day or two of camp and follow that with several more letters during the session. Please address all mail to:

**Your Child's Name**  
**Camp Helen Brachman**  
**9341 Asbury Drive**  
**Almond, WI 54909**

## Cell Phones

Please do not send your child to camp with a cell phone as campers are not allowed to have cell phones. Any cell phones brought to camp will be kept in the office. Campers may not receive or make phone calls while at camp. We have limited phone lines for camp business and emergencies. If you have a concern about your child, please feel free to call the Director at (715) 366-2234.

## Cancellations

We have waiting lists for many of our sessions. Please notify us as soon as possible if your child will not be able to attend. This will allow us to fill the slot with a child on the waiting list! Refunds will be given for cancellations made two weeks or more prior to the camper's stay at CHB.

## Sending Children Home Early

CHB reserves the right to send home campers who may be a danger to themselves or others or who are not following established behavior guidelines. If we must send your child home, for any reason, including illness, accident or behavior problems, **you are responsible for arranging transportation for your child to get home.**

## Evaluation

Your child will bring an evaluation form home. Please take a few minutes to fill out this form with your child. Your comments and suggestions help us to provide safe and enjoyable summer camp experiences!

## Lost and Found

Each day at camp we try to connect any lost and found item with the person it belongs to! Items that have names on them are easy to get back to the camper. Please label everything you send to camp with your child's name. At the end of each session any lost and found items not claimed will be sent down to our Milwaukee office and kept there until August 30. Any items not claimed by August 30 will be donated to charity.

## Camp Helen Brachman Facebook Page

We do post pictures on our Facebook page! Like us and check in on what campers and staff are doing!

**Non-discrimination Statement:** The U.S Department of Agriculture prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.) If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov). Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.