

**Pono Outdoor
Program
Member Handbook
Summer Camp 2026**

❖ **Mission Statement**

- At Pono Outdoor Program, a Private Educational Association, we believe deeply in the power of community. It truly takes a village to support the well-being and development of our keiki. We ask that parents and guardians support the values, safety standards, and shared kuleana that uphold our self-governed program. Ongoing cooperation is vital. Failure to uphold responsibilities or repeated disregard for protocols may result in membership termination. Mahalo for walking this path with us in pono.

❖ **Pilina: Building Relationships through Communication**

➤ **Signal Thread (mandatory to install app)**

- Pono Outdoor Program PEA 25-26
 - We share pictures, themes, communications from the day with parents
- Pono Bulletin Board
 - Where we share cancellations, newsletter, and important information regarding class
- Carpool
 - Once all parents meet, there will be carpool signal groups for the area you live in.
 - ◆ Pono Outdoor Program is not held liable for any carpool arrangements.

➤ **Contact**

- Ms. Bianca is the Director — and the heart — of the Pono Outdoor Program. She handles all program-wide communication, including emails, newsletters, behavioral support, and connecting with ‘ohana about any questions, concerns, or celebrations. You can reach her directly at **808-298-7275**, Monday through Friday, between **8:00 AM and 4:00 PM**. As a mom and a farmer, she will respond to calls and texts during business hours.

❖ **Where we Gather, Learn and Grow**


➤ **Weekly Locations**

- Please always check signal threads in case there is a change due to safety concerns.
- MONDAY- THURSDAY 9AM-2PM (LOCATIONS)
 - Forrest days- Giggle hill, Olinda forrest, Makawao Forrest
 - ◆ Raingear
 - ◆ Pants
 - ◆ Study water proof shoes/ boots
 - Beach Days- Kanaha, Baldwin, Cove park
 - ◆ Bright Rashguard
 - ◆ Towel
 - ◆ Sunscreen
 - ◆ Hat
 - ◆ Boogie board
 - `Iao Valley(Kepaniwai Park)
 - ◆ Raingear

- ◆ Swim suit under clothes
- ◆ Towel
- ◆ Sunscreen
- ◆ Hat

➤ **Daily Schedule outline**

- 9am-10am: Opening circle, Oli, lesson, Journals, bathroom/snack
- 10am-11:30am: Hiking, foraging, learning
- 11:30am-12pm: Lunch
- 12pm-1:30pm: Free to learn, swim, play, games
- 1:30-2pm: Ho`oponopono



3 DAILY PILLARS

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">oli</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg); font-size: small;"> · Hawaiian customs · kīia (observer/forecast) · · check-in · guest demos · announcements · </div>	<p>- AM -</p> <p>SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING (FOCUS)</p> <p>resource stations open</p> <p>teachers available for questions</p> <p>volunteer/teachers sharing their passions</p> <p>guest demos extended into optional classes</p> <p>portfolios out</p> <p>freedom to learn</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">oli</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg); font-size: small;"> · take time · blessing of food · recharge · rest · · nourishment · meal culture · conversation · </div>	<p>- PM -</p> <p>SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING (MOVEMENT)</p> <p>resources available for expanding on morning projects</p> <p>teachers available for guidance</p> <p>water, sand, swimming</p> <p>forest adventures, nature walks</p> <p>foraging, exploring</p> <p>freedom to learn</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">oli</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg); font-size: small;"> · solving problems · healing · conflict resolution · · compliments · agreements · help each other · </div>
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❖ **Hands, Heart and Hawaiian values: Foundational skills**

➤ **Thriving skills**

- Knife safety and skills
- Water purification skills
- Fire safety as well as multiple ways to start a fire
- Knot making and undoing
- Foraging skills medicinal as well as edible
- Shelter building skills in our forrest
- Positive effective Communication skills
- Community knowledge- although we are a class without walls at times our community we can't control however we do teach our keiki how to maneuver around uncomfortable situations and at times we will contact the police department to ensure safety of all community members.

➤ **Hawaiian Customs, Oli and chants**

- As an **indigenous-based program**, we are committed to honoring and uplifting the traditions of this land. We seek regular guidance from **kānaka maoli (Native Hawaiians)** to ensure we respectfully engage with Hawaiian customs, protocol, and the 'āina of Maui.

➤ **Oli/ Chants**

- As part of our cultural grounding and daily rhythm, we begin and close each day with an oli (**Hawaiian chant**) tied to our program's three pillars:

Morning Circle, Lunch Blessing, and Ho‘oponopono Closing Circle.
These oli help us connect to the ‘āina, to each other, and to the deeper purpose of our time together.

- We kindly ask that you help your keiki learn these chants at home. **PDFs and audio recordings** for practice are available in the **member section of our website**. Login information and passwords will be shared in our **monthly newsletters**.
- While we deeply respect all religious and spiritual perspectives, chanting in ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i is one meaningful way we unify as an ‘ohana and show reverence for the **language and spirit of this land**.

❖ **Our Shared Kuleana: Shared Responsibilities**

➤ **Dropoff**

- Drop-off: 8:45–8:55 AM. Oli starts promptly at 9:00. Early arrivals must wait with keiki.
- Pick-up: 2:00 PM sharp, with a grace period until 2:15. After 2:15, a \$1/minute late fee applies.
- Sign-in/out with initials is required daily.
- Early pickups must be before 1:30 PM to avoid disrupting our Ho‘oponopono circle.

➤ **Absent Notification**

- Notify absences/tardiness via ponooutdoorprogram@gmail.com.
- No proration or makeup for missed days.
- Keep children home if they show signs of illness (runny nose, fever, cough). Must be symptom-free for 24 hours before returning.
- Children arriving sick will be sent home. We trust your discernment and do not require medical notes or tests.

➤ **Member Contribution**

- Per signed Contract via enrollment process
 - Payments must be collected before Summer Camp begins. Cash or direct deposit into the program's account.
 - We observe the right to discontinue member participation at any time if we feel the members of our association is not integral.
 - ◆ Contributions are due before Summer Camp begins.
 - Direct deposit- \$1500
 - First Hawaiian Bank (Pono Outdoor Program PEA)
 - Account number 0041865814
 - Routing number 121301015
 - P.O. Box 384 Kula, Hawaii 96790

➤ **Supplies**

- All students must have in their backpacks daily, with their supplies. We reserve the right to call home if they are not prepared with the right clothing/ footwear or supplies on a continuous basis.
 - A [waterproof backpack](#)- Small enough to fit child
 - An extra set of clothes in a labeled ziploc bag (warm layers, shirt, pants, underwear, socks)
 - [Raingear](#) (WATERPROOF pants and jacket - we recommend this set); rain boots also required on rainy days
 - Gardening gloves for trash cleanup and gardening projects
 - Garden Shovel- for farming

- Sun protection (mineral sunscreen only - see Maui County sunscreen law)
- [Morakniv Kids Knife](#) (this is the only knife we allow in class for safety purposes)
- Towel on water days (Tuesdays, Thursdays, sometimes Fri)
- A full water bottle (we have water to refill throughout the day)
- Lunch and a separate snack (see meals)
- Pencil bag with names on items (no boxes please) with the following:
 - 2 sharpened pencils
 - Set of colored pencils
 - Set of crayons
 - 1 big eraser
 - 1 pencil sharpener
 - 1 kid scissors
 - 1 mini tape measure
 - Plastic 20 ounce plastic bottle to use for water filter- Ex. coke or water bottle

** All supplies must be labeled with your child's name or we may label them **

➤ Lunches

- To support your keiki's ability to learn, explore, and thrive throughout the day, we ask that families follow these important food and hydration guidelines:
 - **Please ensure your child eats a nutritious breakfast before arriving.** A full belly helps support focus, energy, and a positive mindset.
 - **Water bottles must be filled at home** each morning. We do have water available for refills during the day.
 - **Each child should bring a healthy lunch and a separate morning snack.**
 - **No candy, chocolate, juice, or sports drinks** are allowed—**water only** to help regulate energy and hydration.
 - **Morning snack should be packed separately** from lunch, as it's a short break and easy access is helpful. We recommend **fresh fruits or vegetables** to minimize allergens and reduce waste/wrappers that can blow into the 'āina.
 - **Lunch is our main meal and a shared time of connection.** We sit down together to enjoy a full meal, encourage mindful eating, and give gratitude for the food that sustains us.
 - Following this structure helps your keiki stay **nourished, grounded, and ready to engage fully** in our day.

❖ In Rhythm with Nature: Cancellations and Safety

➤ Weather

- At Pono Outdoor Program, we operate **rain or shine**, and keiki must have **rain gear packed daily**. Families are responsible for **checking the**

weather and packing accordingly. We will **only cancel class or change locations** if conditions become **dangerous**.

- Please stay connected to our **Signal Bulletin Board** for all weather-related updates.
- **Classes Will Be Canceled or Moved Only If:**
 1. **Thunderstorms or Lightning Storms**
 2. **Tropical Storm Watches or Warnings**
 3. **Hurricanes Approaching the Island Within 24 Hours**
 4. **Wind Advisories** (Including conditions that may cause fire risk, falling trees, or downed power lines — this is a new precaution due to recent wildfires near our program sites.)
- While we believe “**there’s no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing**,” the **safety of our keiki and ‘ohana is our top priority**. If any of the above conditions are present, we will reach out to our council members and may **cancel class** rather than relocate, to avoid requiring families to travel in unsafe conditions.
 - **Notification Process**
 - We will send **cancellation notices via Signal groups by 7:00 PM the evening before** class, allowing you time to plan and make arrangements. Please ensure your notifications are turned on for the Signal app.

➤ **First aid**

- To ensure safety, ALL staff on duty always have a first aid kit on their person, this is basic needs in case there is a cut or a fall.
- In the event that a child is injured **beyond our ability to treat on site**, we will immediately **notify the parent or guardian by phone and via the Signal text thread**.
- If the injury appears **serious or life-threatening**, and you have provided prior consent, we will **call 911** without delay. If we are **unable to reach a parent or emergency contact**, our staff will take **all necessary and precautionary actions** to ensure the safety and well-being of the child — including contacting emergency services if deemed necessary.
- We fully respect each family’s right to make informed medical decisions and will always aim to reach you first. Please make sure your **emergency contact information is current** and that your **preferences for emergency response are clearly documented** in your child’s enrollment file.
- By enrolling, I voluntarily accept these risks and, on behalf of myself and my enrolled child(ren), hereby release and hold harmless the Pono Outdoor Program—its founders, directors, facilitators, volunteers, and agents—from any and all liability for injury, illness, accident, loss, or death arising from participation in any PEA activities, on or off-site. This includes, but is not limited to, incidents resulting from nature, equipment, or participant conduct, even when safety protocols are followed.

❖ **Ho‘omākaukau: Dressing with Intention**

➤ **Dress code Policy**

- Please **do not message staff or Signal threads to ask about daily attire**. Instead, refer to the following regular schedule to ensure your keiki arrives prepared for each day
- As stated in our **student contract and handbook**, we reserve the right to contact families for inappropriate dress. As an outdoor program, proper attire is essential for safety, respect, and comfort. Please follow these guidelines:
 - **Shorts must cover private areas** when sitting cross-legged.
 - **No crop tops or midriff-exposing clothing**, except for proper swimsuits.
 - **No offensive words, logos, or graphics** on attire.
 - **Shorts must be worn under dresses and skirts** at all times.
 - **Swimsuits must fully cover the lower body** for girls. Two pieces are fine but must cover the top and lower body for our developing young ladies.
 - **Red rash guards are mandatory** on all beach/water days (for visibility and safety).
 - **Appropriate footwear is required** based on the day's schedule
- Locations:
 - **Forest Days**
 - ◆ Expect **cold weather** (as low as 40°F), **rain, mud, and bugs**.
 - ◆ Required attire: **warm layered clothing, sneakers, hiking shoes, or boots** (NO Crocs or slippers).
 - ◆ Sneakers, hiking shoes, or boots are **required**. Crocs and slippers **are not permitted** due to safety concerns.
 - ◆ This helps prevent injuries and weather-related emergencies that may result in a call home for pickup.
 - **Water Days**
 - ◆ Expect **sun, wind, water play, and potential rain**.
 - ◆ Keiki must arrive **wearing swimwear under their clothing**. A **colorful rash guard** is highly recommended.
 - ◆ Always pack a **towel** and **rain gear**, even if weather is uncertain.
 - ◆ **Slippers and Crocs are acceptable** on these days.
 - ◆ If your child **cannot swim**, we strongly encourage bringing **floaties** until they are water confident
 - **Rainy Days**
 - ◆ Dress in **rain boots, waterproof pants, and a waterproof jacket**.
 - ◆ Always pack **extra clothes in a dry bag** for changing if needed.
 - **Rotational Days**
 - ◆ These vary depending on activities. Attire instructions will be posted in the **Signal Bulletin Board thread**. Please check regularly for updates.

❖ **Living Pono: Behavioral Expectations**

➤ **Probation Period**

- All new members of Pono Outdoor Program begin with a **90-day probationary period**. This initial phase allows our team to thoughtfully observe whether the program is a strong fit for your keiki, and ensures that the learning environment supports both their **individual needs** and the **overall harmony of our ‘ohana**.
- While we are committed to creating an inclusive and enriching space for all students, we recognize that **every child is unique**, and sometimes a different environment may better support their growth. This period offers both our team and your ‘ohana an opportunity to assess alignment with **honesty, compassion, and mutual respect**.
- To support this process, we will hold **monthly check-in meetings** with parents or guardians during the probationary period. These conversations are intended to:
 - Maintain open communication
 - Share meaningful observations
 - Explore additional support or adjustments if needed
 - Ensure that your keiki is thriving in our program
- Our goal is to walk this journey **together**, building a foundation of trust and support that honors both your child’s development and the spirit of our learning community.

➤ **Behavior Policy & Zero Tolerance Guidelines**

- As an outdoor program rooted in **community, empathy, and personal growth**, we understand that misunderstandings and interpersonal challenges may naturally arise among peers. At Pono Outdoor Program, we are committed to guiding our keiki through these moments with **compassionate redirection**, teaching tools for **healthy communication, emotional awareness, and mutual respect**.
 - However, there are certain behaviors that fall under our **zero-tolerance policy**. **Immediate Grounds for Disciplinary Action Include:**
 - ◆ **Intentional physical harm**, especially if it results in **injury or visible harm (e.g., blood or bruising)**
 - ◆ **Harassment or bullying** of any kind, including:
 - Demeaning language
 - Inappropriate or unsafe conversations
 - Repeated exclusion
 - Making another child feel unsafe, unwelcome, or “less than”

These actions are **not in alignment with our values** of **aloha, safety, and mutual respect**, and will result in an **immediate call home** and documented intervention.

➤ **Behavior Intervention Process**

- We follow a **three-warning system**, and families will be **notified privately via Signal** when behavioral concerns arise. Our goal is not punishment, but **growth and accountability**, and we believe in partnering with parents to support positive change.
- If concerning behavior **continues after interventions and a review with our Council of Support**, or if a **single incident is deemed severe enough**, it may result in **temporary suspension or withdrawal** from the program. These decisions are made thoughtfully, with input from our council, and always with the well-being of the entire learning community in mind.
- While we strive to be an inclusive, supportive space where **all keiki can thrive**, we also recognize that the Pono **Outdoor Program may not be the right fit for every child**. Our **kuleana (responsibility)** is to protect the emotional and physical safety of all students and staff. We ask for your **full cooperation and open communication** to help us maintain a safe, respectful, and pono learning environment for everyone.

➤ **Social media**

- If you choose to share about your experience with **Pono Outdoor Program** on social media, we welcome you to **tag us**:
 - 📷 Instagram & Facebook: **@pono_outdoor_program**
 - However, for **legal and compliance purposes**, we kindly ask that you **do not refer to our program as a “school”** in any posts, hashtags, or descriptions. Pono Outdoor Program is registered as an **educational program under PEA 508(c)(1)(a)** and not classified as a school.
- As a private program, all members agree to **respect the integrity and privacy** of our organization. This includes a mutual understanding that:
 - Defamation, slander, or negative public commentary about Pono Outdoor Program PEA is not permitted, either online or in private communication.
 - The Director reserves the right to **contact individuals privately** to request the **removal or revision of any public content** that may misrepresent or compromise the privacy of our association.

We mahalo you for your support and partnership in maintaining the values, privacy, and respect that keep our ‘ohana strong.

➤ **Electronics & Social Media Policy**

- To stay aligned with our outdoor and nature-based philosophy, we ask that **no electronic devices** (phones, tablets, smartwatches, etc.) be brought to class. If your keiki needs a device for aftercare or transportation coordination, it **must remain off and in their backpack** during program hours. Devices that are turned on during class will be **collected by staff and returned at the end of the day**.

❖ **It Takes an Ohana: Volunteering and supporting your Keiki**

➤ **Family Involvement & Volunteering**

- We love when family members join us! Your presence enriches our ‘ohana and creates lasting memories for your keiki. Families are **especially encouraged to volunteer on surf days and farm work days**, where extra hands and eyes make all the difference.
 - When volunteering:
 - Please join us in **morning oli, Ho‘oponopono closing circles**, and help with **keiki safety** throughout the day.
 - For **legal and safety reasons**, all **bathroom runs must include at least one staff member**—thank you for understanding.
 - You're warmly invited to **hike, play in the water, participate in life skills**, and observe **specialty classes**.
 - We believe learning is for all ages — when parents model engagement, keiki thrive too!
 - When you arrive, feel free to ask any staff member, **“Where can I help?”** Your willingness to step in makes a big impact.
- **Want to Share a Skill or Lead an Activity?**
 - If you have a **special skill, cultural practice, or hands-on project** you'd like to share, we invite you to volunteer during our **Self-Directed Learning time (Monday–Thursday, 9:00–11:30 AM)**. Please complete our **Volunteer Interest Form** [insert link here] so we can coordinate and support your visit.
 - Your presence and participation help us grow strong as a village — mahalo for being part of our community!