



Dallas Park & Recreation

## **Volunteer Orientation**

### **Mission**

The Dallas Park and Recreation Department's mission is to champion lifelong recreation and serve as responsible stewards of the city's parks, trails, and open spaces.

### **Vision**

With that mission in mind, the Department's vision for the future is for a comprehensive system of parks, trails, open spaces, and recreation facilities that sustains, inspires, and invigorates.

### **Definition of "Volunteer"**

A "volunteer" is anyone, who without compensation performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of the Department. A "volunteer" must be officially registered and approved by Volunteer Services prior to performance of the task and issued a volunteer approval number. Once approved, a volunteer may provide service at any Park and Recreation location or multiple locations.

### **Volunteer Vision Statement**

To attract, recruit, and place quality individuals to serve as volunteers for the Dallas Park and Recreation Department; and develop, motivate, reward, and recognize these volunteers.

### **Procedures for Volunteering**

- ✓ Must go through an initial interview process
- ✓ Must fill out a volunteer application
- ✓ Must undergo a screening process

### **Goals of the Volunteer Program**

The purpose of the volunteer program is to expand and enhance the delivery of quality services by promoting citizen participation within the Dallas Park and Recreation Department. The City of Dallas encourages its citizens to contribute their valuable time and talents on a volunteer basis. This program is designed as an avenue for citizens with a variety of backgrounds and experiences to participate in the daily work and activities of the Department.

Quality services will be delivered to the citizens of the City of Dallas in an effective and efficient manner through the concerted efforts of Department staff and volunteers. The volunteers' role will be to compliment and supplement Department staff.

Dallas Park and Recreation Department strives to create meaningful volunteer experiences by allowing volunteers to share in the Department's mission.

### **Who Volunteers?**

Citizens from various economic, ethnic, social and political backgrounds may apply for volunteer opportunities with the Dallas Park and Recreation Department. Volunteer candidates fall into the following groups:

#### **Individual Adults**

- ✓ Professionals wanting to share their skills
- ✓ Retirees wanting to gain fulfillment after retirement

- ✓ Individuals who have time to give
- ✓ Court mandated individuals requiring community service

### **Youth/Youth Groups**

- ✓ Students ages 14 and older
- ✓ Students ages 13 and younger (must be accompanied by parent/guardian who is at least 19 years of age)
- ✓ Truancy Court mandated youth
- ✓ Students needing extra credit for school
- ✓ Youth groups from schools, churches and leadership programs

### **Groups**

- ✓ Community Groups
- ✓ Neighborhood Associations
- ✓ Employees representing a business or corporation
- ✓ Religious Groups
- ✓ Fraternities/Sororities
- ✓ Families

### **Staff as Volunteers**

The City accepts the services of staff as volunteers provided that the volunteer service is:

- ✓ Provided totally without any coercive nature
- ✓ Involves work which is outside the scope of normal staff duties
- ✓ Is provided outside of usual working hours

Park and Recreation employees who need to do court mandated volunteer hours must sign up with another city department or organization.

### **Volunteer Policy**

The Dallas Park and Recreation (PKR) Department may not discharge an individual, fail or refuse an individual, or otherwise discriminate against an individual because of the individual's race, color, age, religion, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, political opinions, or affiliations.

Volunteers may be utilized in many programs and activities of the Department and serve at appropriate levels of skill as determined by the Volunteer Coordinator. Every volunteer is expected to consistently maintain satisfactory performance standards. Performance deficiencies should first be addressed by the mutually cooperative efforts of the supervisor and the volunteer. If performance standards are not met, the volunteer is subject to reassignment of duties or possible discharge.

The following types of conduct are unacceptable and may be cause for reassignment of duties or possible discharge depending upon the facts and circumstances of each case. In some cases, staff may have to ask the volunteer to leave the premises or call 911. The examples given are typical but not all-inclusive:

- ✓ Inability or unwillingness to perform assigned work
- ✓ Failure to show up for volunteer scheduled times
- ✓ Arguing over assignments or instructions
- ✓ Inattention, inefficiency, loafing, sleeping, carelessness, or negligence
- ✓ Taking excessive time for eating or break periods
- ✓ Excessive use of personal cell phones or other devices while on duty
- ✓ Interference with the work of others
- ✓ Discourteous or irresponsible treatment of the public or employees
- ✓ Deliberate damage to or destruction of city equipment or property
- ✓ Unauthorized alteration, removal, destruction, or disclosure of city records

- ✓ Failure to follow city or departmental safety rules and regulations
- ✓ Smoking in a prohibited area
- ✓ Endangering of one's own safety or that of others
- ✓ Cheating, forging, or willful falsification of official city reports or records
- ✓ Theft, regardless of item value
- ✓ Possessing, ingesting, inhaling, or injecting a drugs or alcohol during working hours; or on city property
- ✓ Deliberate causing of physical injury to an employee or citizen
- ✓ Profane, abusive, threatening, or loud and boisterous language
- ✓ Sexual harassment
- ✓ Possession of a weapon capable of causing serious bodily injury
- ✓ Failure to maintain dress, grooming, and personal hygiene standards appropriate to the work environment

### **Dress Policy**

In order to foster and maintain an atmosphere of professionalism, all PKR employees and volunteers are expected to present a neat, clean, and professional appearance at all times. The PKR supervisor at your volunteer location will inform you of the acceptable attire.

### **Drug and Alcohol Policy**

It is Dallas Park and Recreation policy to ensure a smoke- and drug-free workplace for all employees and volunteers. Being under the influence, using, possessing or distributing controlled substances, including alcohol and tobacco, at any time during your volunteer service for Dallas Park and Recreation is strictly prohibited.

### **Timesheets**

When a volunteer is approved, a timecard will be generated and sent to the Site Volunteer Coordinator. Volunteers should sign in and out on their timecard. The timecard is to be included with the monthly volunteer hours report sent to the Volunteer Services Office once a month.

### **Record Keeping**

Volunteers and appropriate staff shall be responsible for submitting all appropriate records and information to Volunteer Services in a timely and accurate fashion. Volunteer records are accorded the same confidentiality as staff personnel records.

### **Problem Resolution Procedure**

We encourage you to bring problems to the attention of your supervisor. If a satisfactory solution is not achieved contact the Volunteer Coordinator immediately.

### **Termination, Discipline and Grievances**

Any violation of policy may result in a verbal or written warning (which shall be placed in your volunteer file), a conference, suspension, or dismissal depending on the severity of the infraction. Termination will apply to all Dallas Park and Recreation locations.

### **Phone Policy**

Please refrain from using your personal phone until you are on your break, except in an emergency. Silence your cell phone. Center phones can only be used for personal calls to request transportation or emergencies.

### **Breaks**

Breaks resulting in more than 15 minutes will result in your volunteer service being signed out on your timesheet for the day. A volunteer may check back in on the same day at the discrepancy of center staff.

**Safety Information**

Volunteers should notify their supervisor immediately if they are injured during their period of volunteering. Volunteers should also inform them of any safety issues, concerns or emergencies. Volunteers should notify their supervisor immediately if a participant is injured during their period of volunteering.

**Volunteer Opportunities**

**Hours of Operation**

Most Park and Recreation Centers are opened Monday – Thursday from 8:00 am – 9:00 pm , Friday 2:00 pm – 7:00 pm and Saturday 9:00 am – 5:00 pm.

**Recreation Center Programs**

After School – The Dallas Park and Recreation Department offers After School Programs (ASP) at each of our recreation centers and our DISD partnering schools. Our ASP offers academic and recreational programs for children between the ages of 5-12 years old. After School Programs are operated in conjunction with DISD calendar.

**Health and Wellness** – The Dallas Park and Recreation Department offers a variety of programs and services to assist in living a healthier lifestyle and improving overall quality of life. Our 43 Recreation Centers offer a plethora of Health and Wellness programs for citizens of all ages and ability levels.

**Sports**– Dallas Park and Recreation Department provides year-round opportunities for individuals to participate in a variety of team sports in a fun, social, family-friendly atmosphere. Competition levels vary from beginner to competitive. We are sure to have a sport and competition level just right for you!

**Custodian** – Volunteers are needed to serve as custodians maintaining a clean, attractive, sanitary and a safe recreation facility and park.

**Administrative** - Volunteers are needed to provide customer service and greet visitors with a smile. Volunteer duties in this area can range from tasks such as answering phone, filing and assisting staff with basic operations.

**Special Projects** – If you have a special skill that could benefit the recreation centers please let us know. You could teach a class to children, seniors, or adults, you could help plan special events, help with community events and more.

**Volunteer Recognition Program**

We recognize the incredible amount of time, effort and energy that our volunteers give to help with our programs and events. Every year the Park Department holds an annual volunteer appreciation event additionally to volunteers being recognized throughout the year for their incredible dedication.

By signing below, you acknowledge that you have participated in a volunteer orientation and understand the Dallas Park and Recreation Department policies discussed in the orientation and I agree to abide by them.

Volunteer Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Park and Recreation Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(Provide volunteer with a signed copy and submit with application to Office of Volunteer Services)