

*City of Kansas City Missouri  
Parks and Recreation Department  
Volunteer Guidelines*

**Guidelines**

The Kansas City, Missouri, Parks and Recreation Department is committed to providing the highest level of care for our park facilities, natural and historic resources, while at the same time offering top quality programming to those we serve. We believe that the benefits of parks and recreation are far-reaching and vital to each and every individual, family and organization in Kansas City.

**Vision Statement**

The fulfillment of the mission of the Kansas City Missouri Parks and Recreation Department is only accomplished through the active participation of citizens of the community. To this end, the Department accepts and encourages the involvement of volunteers at all levels and within all appropriate programs and activities. All Department employees are required to assist in the creation of appropriate meaningful and productive roles in which volunteers might serve, and to assist in the recruitment, management and recognition of department volunteers. The goals of the volunteer program include increasing and improving the capabilities of park staff through the effective utilization of community volunteers and more importantly, to provide a means for people to participate in their community in a fulfilling, fun and rewarding way.

**Authority to Permit Volunteers to Provide Services**

As a function of its authority under the City Charter to plan, develop, extend, maintain and operate a parks and recreation system the Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners has historically provided a multitude of volunteer opportunities. By Resolution 080866 the City Council asked the Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners to establish appropriate policies for its volunteer programs.

**Goals and Objectives**

Volunteers are valuable supplements to department staff. As such, volunteers shall be extended meaningful and productive assignments, be treated fairly, be assisted through effective supervision, be provided an opportunity for full involvement and participation in the work of the Department insofar as appropriate, and be recognized for service provided by the Department. Volunteers shall actively perform their duties to the best of their abilities and to remain loyal to the goals, rules and procedures of the Department.

Volunteers do not replace paid staff; rather the Board enhances the professional staff's ability to achieve the Department's goals in accordance with its priorities. No volunteers shall be appointed to serve in a position where there is a conflict of interest with an activity or program of the Department, whether personal, philosophical, or financial.

The Department accepts the service of all volunteers with the understanding that such service is at the sole discretion of the Department.

Volunteers agree that the Department may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to no longer accept the volunteer's service to the Department. Of course, the volunteer may choose to stop their activities at any time. Volunteers are asked that when possible the Department be informed of their decision to allow time for planning for the Volunteer's absence.

### **Definitions**

**Volunteer** means a person who, of his/her free will, provides services to the Board or to a Department employee or appointed official without receiving monetary or material compensation, except that Commissioners serving on the Board of Parks and Recreation or member of any task force or committee formed by the Board or the City shall not be considered a volunteer for the purposes of this article.

**Regular service volunteer** means a volunteer engaged in service activities on an ongoing or continual basis.

**Periodic volunteer** means a volunteer who offers to provide a one time or occasional voluntary service.

**Special case volunteer** means a volunteer participating in student projects, a student who is receiving qualified educational credit for their service commitment or a student performing community service oriented projects.

**Community Service Worker** is a person who is ordered by any judge to perform community service as a sentencing alternative. A Community Service Worker is not a volunteer, but performs work similar to that of a volunteer.

### **Designation of Volunteers/Community Service Workers**

Each person providing volunteer services must be designated as a regular service volunteer, a periodic volunteer, a special case volunteer, or a community service worker by the person or entity authorizing the person's service as a volunteer. The designation must be communicated to the person.

### **Use of Volunteers to Replace/City Employees Prohibited**

Volunteer services will not be used in a manner that would result in an existing City employee losing his or her employment with the City.

### **Minors as Volunteers**

Volunteers who have not yet attained the age of 18 years must have written consent of a parent or legal guardian before being assigned to any volunteer services. Students volunteering for service learning credit hours for their school must submit their school name and contact information before being assigned to any volunteer services.

**(Reference Appendix 1: Consent Form & Volunteer Job Descriptions).**

**Community Service Worker's/Organized Groups**

The Metropolitan Community Service Program (MCSP) established in November 2001, recognizes the Kansas City Parks and Recreation Department as a working environment for the assignment of individuals who have been ordered by a judge to complete community service. The MCSP works under the guidance of the courts and must properly and timely report back to those courts the completion or failure of an individual to complete the community service that has been ordered. The Parks and Recreation Department selection and approval as an MCSP worksite adheres to certain policies and procedures and are followed by the Community Service Program. Other community service worker programs as organized and administered through other court jurisdictions may be utilized as they are available. MCSP workers or other Community Service Workers are not to be working, supervising, teaching or in any manner be involved with youth or children or elderly individuals with any form of disabilities.

**Volunteers Cannot Direct and/or Supervise**

Volunteers do not have the authority to give direction to any City employee or City elected or appointed officials.

**Family Members of City Employees**

Family members of city employees and elected and appointed officials of the City may provide services to the Parks and Recreation Department as a volunteer. However, no person generally can be placed within the same division, office or workplace in which a family member is a city employee when the volunteer may be under the control, authority, or supervision of such a family member or when such volunteer assignment may create a conflict of interest.

**Reimbursement of Expenses & Acceptance of Goods & Food**

Volunteers may be eligible for reimbursement of pre-approved, actual out of pocket expenses incurred while engaging in volunteer service. All actual out of pocket expenses for which reimbursement is sought must be supported by receipts. Volunteers are ineligible to receive reimbursement related to travel to and from volunteer assignments. Periodic and special case volunteers may receive articles of clothing and other goods and food and refreshment offered at the activities, events, or assignments to which they are assigned. Volunteers may not travel on behalf of the City.

**Computer and Internet Usage**

The City may provide a volunteer access to computers and the Internet to assist a volunteer in performing his or her duties. However, no volunteer shall be granted access to the City's Electronic Communication System or any other access to confidential information or documents unless approved by the person or Board designating the person as a volunteer. **(Reference Appendix 2: City of Kansas City Missouri, Administrative Regulation 1-16).**

### **Termination of Volunteer Services**

A person's ability to serve as a volunteer may be terminated by the person or entity authorized to designate the person as a volunteer at any time and for any reason without any showing of cause to the volunteer.

### **Department Expectations of Volunteers**

Volunteers are expected to act on behalf of the Department, in the best interests of the Department and according to the Department's Policies and Procedures.

### **Benefits to the Volunteers**

Volunteers receive personal gratification by becoming involved in the community. The Board may also honor volunteers at appreciation luncheons or dinners. Volunteers may also receive tokens of appreciation such as shirts, caps, coffee mugs, etc.

### **Application**

Volunteers will officially express their interest in volunteer opportunities by completing a Parks and Recreation Volunteer Services Program Application (regular service or special case). **(Reference Appendix 3: Volunteer Services Program Application).**

### **Volunteer Areas**

The Department has three volunteer areas: parks, programs and facilities.

### **Background Investigation**

All volunteers are subject to a background check. All volunteers who are responsible for the safety and well being of participants involved in the Parks and Recreation program on a regular basis will be subject to a background screening consisting of a sexual offender registry search and a criminal history search. Any of the following offenses will disqualify a volunteer from any service activities.

- a. All Felony Offenses – kidnapping, aggravated burglary, carjacking, arson, drug related crimes, etc.
- b. All Sex Offenses – child molestation, sexual assault, rape, sexual battery, indecent exposure, child exploitation, etc.
- c. All Violent Offenses – murder, manslaughter, aggravated assault, robbery, an offense involving a weapon, etc.

If any disqualifying offenses are reported in the background check, the Parks and Recreation Department staff will notify the volunteer that they are disqualified and their service be immediately terminated.

### **Health Information**

Volunteers should notify their supervisor immediately if they are injured during their period of volunteering. Included within the Parks and Recreation Volunteer Services Program Application is a “Volunteer Health Information Form”. **(Reference Appendix 4: Volunteer Health Information Form).**

### **Home Address and Phone Number Changes**

Volunteers should notify their point of contact/supervisor with the department immediately if their home address or phone number changes during the time of service.

### **Dress Policy**

Supervisors will inform volunteers of any dress policy which they will be asked to follow.

### **Preventing Accusations of Child Abuse, Sexual Abuse, and Inappropriate Behavior**

In addition to the information that follows on Sexual Harassment, a volunteer should not allow individuals to sit on his/her lap, should not lift, hold or carry an individual except in the case of an emergency; should never touch an individual in their private areas, should never use teasing, abusive or cruel language, should never force an individual into a seat, shake them, grab them or use punishment that can be perceived as abusive. **(Reference Appendix 5: City of Kansas City Missouri, Human Resources Rules & Policies).**

### **Sexual Harassment**

Volunteers are strictly prohibited from conduct that could be perceived as any form of harassment or abuse. “Sexual Harassment” refers to verbal or physical conduct that is unsolicited, offensive, and detrimental to an individual, whether or not directed specifically to a person. **(Reference Appendix 5: City of Kansas City Missouri, Human Resources Rules & Policies).**

### **Discrimination/Harrassment Policy**

**(Reference Appendix 9: City of Kansas City Missouri, Human Resources Equal Employment Opportunity Discrimination/Harrassment Policy).**

### **ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY REGARDING THREATS OR ACTS OF VIOLENCE**

It is the goal of the City of Kansas City, Missouri and the Parks and Recreation Department to provide a workplace in which each and every employee can be free from violence. It is our belief that everyone with whom we come in contact in our work deserves to be treated with courtesy and respect. This means that we treat each other, citizens, suppliers, and all others in this manner. As a result, we must take appropriate steps to reduce the risk of incidents of work related violence.

Therefore, any employee, volunteer or citizen who makes a threat of physical violence against himself/herself or others will be taken seriously and the threat will be dealt with immediately.

A threat is defined as an expression to inflict injury, harm or menace, causing one to be placed in reasonable fear for his/her safety (e.g., “I’m going to knock your block off,” “I’m going to kill myself.”) (**Reference Appendix 6: City of Kansas City Missouri, Human Resources Zero Tolerance Policy Regarding Threats or Acts of Violence**).

#### **Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol Policy**

It is the Department’s policy to ensure a tobacco, drug and alcohol free workplace for all employees, volunteers, and patrons of the Department’s facilities and programs. Being under the influence, using, possessing or distributing controlled or dangerous substances including alcohol and tobacco, at any time during volunteer service is prohibited. .

(**Reference Appendix 5: City of Kansas City Missouri, Human Resources Rules & Policies**).

#### **Policies and Procedures**

Volunteers are responsible for knowing and following the volunteer guidelines policies and procedures. Supervisors of program volunteers will review the Department’s volunteer policies with volunteers. Any violation of policy may result in a verbal or written explanation of the improper actions from a supervisor, a suspension, or dismissal from the program.

#### **Community Service Workers**

Community Service Workers shall be supervised at all times by Law Enforcement and and/or Parks and Recreation Department staff while engaged in work activities on City properties per agreed upon work site rules and regulations with the sponsoring community service provider.

#### **Confidentiality**

Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all confidential or privileged information and documents to which they have access while serving as volunteers. Volunteers will not be placed in situations where they may have access to confidential personnel and/or financial records.

Summary

These Guidelines are designed to give volunteers to the Parks and Recreation Department's facilities and programs the framework for an enjoyable and valuable experience. Your service to the City, the Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners, and the Parks and Recreation Department is greatly appreciated. By volunteering you become part of a legacy of Kansas Citians dating to the 1890s providing volunteer services to the City, Board and Department.

Should you have any questions about these Guidelines or your service, please know your Departmental supervisor is always available to answer questions.

John Fierro  
President

Tyrone Aiken  
Commissioner

Aggie Stackhaus  
Commissioner

Mark McHenry  
Director, Parks and  
Recreation

Meghan Badwey Conger  
Commissioner

Ajamu K. Webster  
Commissioner

Enacted by the Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners on the 9<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2009.

Resolution #28594

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Burnetta Burtin  
Secretary, Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners

**LIST OF APPENDICES**

- Appendix 1 Volunteer Consent Form & Volunteer Job Descriptions**
- Appendix 2 City of Kansas City Missouri Administrative Regulation 1-16  
(Technology Use and Procurement)**
- Appendix 3 Parks and Recreation Department Volunteer Services Program  
Application**
- Appendix 4 Volunteer Health Information Form**
- Appendix 5 City of Kansas City Missouri, Human Resources Rules & Policies**
- Appendix 6 City of Kansas City Missouri, Human Resources Zero Tolerance  
Policy Regarding Threats or Acts of Violence**
- Appendix 7 City of Kansas City Missouri Administrative Regulation 2-08 (City  
Volunteers)**
- Appendix 8 City of Kansas City Missouri Ordinance Number 080837**
- Appendix 9 City of Kansas City Missouri Equal Employment Opportunity  
Discrimination/Harassment Policy**
- Appendix 10 City of Kansas City Missouri Drug & Alcohol Misuse Testing Policy**