

UNITE, GROW,



Denton Parks and Rec

Volunteer Handbook

Table of Contents

Welcome	Page 2
Volunteer Profile	Page 3
Volunteer Opportunities	Page 4
Pre-reporting Procedures	Page 5
Volunteer Policies	Page 7
Social Media Policies	Page 9
Conduct	Page 10
Court Ordered Community Service	Page 12

Appendix

- a. Adult Volunteer Information Packet
- b. Minor Volunteer Information Packet
- c. Order Instructions for Volunteer Background Check (no email)
- d. Event/Project Sign-In and Liability Release (over 18)
- e. Event/Project Sign-In and Liability Release (minor)
- f. Community Service Agreement
- g. Community Service Release & Indemnification
- h. Community Service Time Sheet

Welcome

The City of Denton Parks and Recreation Department (DPARD) is committed to improving the lives of our residents by providing quality parks and recreation experiences for our community. As such we are always on the lookout for exciting new recreation programs and activities to offer to our community; but cannot do it alone. We look forward to working with community members and organizations to reach our common goals and serve the community.

Our Mission

To unite and grow lives, by preserving parks and encouraging play.

Core Values

Strive to Innovate | Seek to improve business operations

Show Compassion | Demonstrate we genuinely care

Create Value | Provide quality service of great value

Inspire Smiles | Encourage play to inspire smiles

Display Candor & Integrity | Serve with transparency & sincerity

Objectives of the DPARD volunteer program

- Engage residents in our community
- Contributing to make our city a great place to live, work, and play
- Expanding services provided to the community
- Increase public awareness and understanding of local parks and rec services and problems.
- To provide an alternative to using tax dollars for salary expense.
- Strengthen service delivery and accomplish work staff could not do without support



Definition of a volunteer

Any individual who gives freely of their time, skill, and services without the expectation of pay

Who are volunteers?

- Anyone wanting to become involved with and contribute to their community
- Anyone seeking work different from their daily job
- Anyone seeking to build contacts and work experience
- Anyone in need of social interaction
- Anyone wanting meaningful work to occupy spare time

Keyword... ANYONE!

Volunteer Benefits

- Connecting with like-minded community members
- Leaving a lasting mark on the beauty, health, and quality of life in your community
- Learning more about your local parks and recreation department
- Acquiring resume building experience and potential letters of recommendation
- Completing service hours for course, organization, certification or court appointed requirements

Volunteer Rights

- Work in a safe environment
- Be treated with respect by all staff members
- Engage in meaningful work and actively included regardless of abilities
- Receive training for your position
- Receive regular evaluations of your performance
- Receive appropriate guidance and direction
- Opportunity to provide feedback about your experience
- Receive recognition for your efforts

Volunteer Responsibilities

- Perform duties promptly and reliably
- Ask questions
- Notify volunteer coordinator when unable to attend scheduled volunteer shift

- Follow all policies and procedures
- Be willing to learn and participate in orientation, training programs, and meetings
- Maintain a working relationship with staff and other volunteers
- Provide feedback about your experience
- Accept the guidance and decision of the volunteer coordinator

Volunteer Opportunities & Roles

The following is a sample of volunteer opportunities provided by DPARD. To view and register for current volunteer opportunities please visit www.dentonparks.com.

- Keep Denton Beautiful
- Special events
- Recreation programs
- Athletic league coaches
- Denton Senior Center activities and committees

Required Pre-Reporting Procedures

The City of Denton Volunteer Procedures [Policy 409.07](#) addresses the procedures and background checks that volunteers are required to undergo before they may begin operating in the City of Denton business environment. This Administrative Directive *only* addresses those volunteers who perform duties that assist departments in their day-to-day operations.

This policy does not apply to volunteers who provide labor for a single City event or City sponsored special events unless specifically noted. Rather, volunteers working a single City event or City sponsored special event will be required to sign in on a release and waiver form on the day of the event. In addition, it does not apply to volunteer labor supplied by individuals who are performing Court ordered community service.

1. **VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT:** All volunteer workers are required to sign a “Volunteer Agreement and Release” that is prepared by the Risk Management department and agree to abide by the statements within the Release before they may report for duty. Non-emancipated volunteer workers (minors who have not obtained Court approval to enter into contracts) under eighteen (18) must obtain their parent’s or legal guardian’s signature on a “Volunteer Agreement and Release” before they may report for duty.
2. **CRIMINAL HISTORY BACKGROUND CHECKS:** All volunteer workers 18 or older must pass a criminal history background check as administered by the Human Resources department if their duties will fall into one or more of the following categories:
 - give them exposure to children, disabled citizens or senior citizens
 - will require them to enter into citizen homes or residences
 - will allow them to have potential access, authorized or unauthorized, to controlled substances
 - will require them to handle cash
 - will require them to drive vehicles or work with motorized equipment such as chippers, mowers, weed eaters, chain saws, etc;
 - will allow them to work with or have access to chemicals or other hazardous substances;
 - potential exposure to confidential information, such as personnel records
 - at the discretion of the volunteers’ supervisors

Although the Human Resources department has established certain criteria by which it analyzes the criminal history backgrounds of applicants for employment for the City of Denton, the City of Denton is not restricted by these standards when determining whether a candidate for volunteer work will be permitted to report for duty. For example, the City of Denton reserves the right to consider a volunteer candidate’s arrest history and probationary history when determining whether the volunteer will be permitted to perform volunteer work. Each review of the criminal history will be done based upon a case by case determination and will be relevant to the department in which the candidate seeks to perform volunteer work and the duties that the volunteer candidate is expected to perform. In no case shall an individual who has been

convicted of a crime involving violence (Misdemeanor A or above) be permitted to report for volunteer duties with the City of Denton. Additionally, in no case shall an individual who has been convicted of a crime against a child be permitted to volunteer in a department that coordinates or facilitates programs for children.

3. **DRUG TESTING:** If requested by the department head or if approved to operate a City of Denton vehicle as described below, volunteer workers will be required to pass a drug screen before they report to the City of Denton. The drug screen that will be administered is identical to the one that new employees must pass before they begin their employment with the City of Denton. See Anti-Substance Abuse and Rehabilitation Policy, No. 108.12.

If, at any time, a City of Denton employee responsible for overseeing the volunteer worker's duties has a reasonable suspicion that the volunteer worker is under the influence of, or incapacitated by, alcohol or drugs, the volunteer worker will be required to leave City property and will not be permitted to return to his/her volunteer duties.

"Reasonable suspicion" with regards to a volunteer worker is not as strict as the "reasonable suspicion" standard required by the drug and alcohol testing of a City of Denton employee under Policy No. 108.12. In the case of a volunteer worker, the City of Denton employee must only establish that sufficient facts exist which, if true, would tend to cause a reasonable person to suspect that the volunteer worker is under the influence of or incapacitated by alcohol or drugs.

If a volunteer worker disputes the City of Denton employee's reasonable suspicion, the volunteer worker may request to take an alcohol breath test and a drug screen. The alcohol breath test must be taken within one hour of being confronted with the reasonable suspicion and the drug screen must be taken within three hours of being confronted with the reasonable suspicion. The alcohol breath test must be administered by a trained and certified breath alcohol technician. The drug screen must be administered and analyzed by a licensed laboratory. The volunteer worker will be required to pay all expenses of the breath test and drug screen. Even if the volunteer worker passes the breath test and the drug screen, he/she is not guaranteed a return to his/her volunteer position.

5. **CASH HANDLING:** Any volunteer who will be handling cash for the benefit of the City of Denton must be approved by the department head and receive training on the City of Denton's cash handling procedures. (See Cash Handling Regulations Policy 403.01).
6. **DRIVING RECORD BACKGROUND CHECKS:** Any volunteer candidate who will be expected or permitted to drive a city vehicle must first receive permission from the department head before being permitted to perform such duty. Upon approval from the department head, the volunteer candidate must agree to a review of his/her driving record and receive clearance from the Risk Manager before being permitted to drive a city vehicle. The Risk

Manager will set standards by which the volunteer candidate will or will not be approved to drive City vehicles. Volunteers for single City events or City sponsored special events are also subject to provisions of this section.

Volunteer Policies

Registration

Online registration for scheduled volunteer opportunities is available at www.dentonparks.com. Volunteers will create an account and register for opportunities under the "Volunteer and Community Service" tab. The volunteer coordinator for each specific event or program will contact you to determine next steps, including any pre-reporting procedures that may need to be completed.

For volunteer groups and service organizations, the group lead will register on one account and complete the required prompts detailing pertinent information regarding their group.

Selection

Volunteers shall be recruited by the city/department on a proactive basis, with the intent of broadening and expanding the volunteer involvement of the community. Volunteers shall be recruited without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, transgender status, gender identity, gender expression, religious affiliation, political affiliation or belief, age (over 40), sexual orientation, genetic information, veteran status or disability status.

The sole qualification for volunteer recruitment shall be suitability to perform a task on behalf of the department. Volunteers may be recruited through either an interest in specific functions or through a general interest in volunteering which will later be matched with a specific function. Lead volunteer roles are filled by board members, veteran volunteers, and new volunteers with certifications or experience in the necessary capacities for the role.

Age Requirements

Volunteers of all ages are welcome to volunteer with parent/guardian supervision. Volunteers 15+ years of age may volunteer without a parent/guardian if a release of liability waiver has been signed by their parent/guardian prior to the volunteer shift.

Release of Liability Waiver

All volunteers must complete a release of liability waiver with photo release prior to volunteering. This can be completed during the online registration process or a printed version of the waiver is available by request at any rec center.

For volunteer groups and service organizations, there will be one form on which all participants must sign to participate as a volunteer.

Position Descriptions

Volunteer roles vary by activity. Event and workday volunteer job descriptions are available on the online registration page. Orientation will include an overview of the duties of the respective position. Printed or PDF job descriptions are also available by request.

Orientation & Training

Orientation and training is done on-site at the beginning of each volunteer shift unless otherwise discussed with the program coordinator. For group tasks orientation is provided to group leaders. By volunteering, group leaders agree to share complete and accurate details with each volunteer in their group.

Transportation

Volunteers must provide their own transportation to and from volunteer opportunities. A city van may be utilized to transport groups of volunteers between activity sites if needed. Please verify with the volunteer coordinator for your activity.

Dress Code

By its nature, Parks and Rec work is done in a variety of indoor and outdoor conditions. Please confirm specific requirements with the program coordinator prior to the scheduled event. Task specific safety wear such as nylon gloves, work gloves, and reflective vests are provided by DPARD for specific tasks. Please wear closed-toe shoes and dress weather-wise for each assigned task. No clothing or tattoos with obscene or offensive sayings, political slogans, alcohol or tobacco ads, no ripped clothing, no pants below the waist, no short shorts, etc. **Remember you are representing Parks and Rec when volunteering.**

Safety

Supervisors will provide safety instruction and necessary PPE during orientation at the beginning of each volunteer opportunity. If you feel unsafe at any time during a volunteer opportunity, please remove yourself from the situation. If you do not receive adequate training, please request additional instruction from the program coordinator, site supervisor, or DPARD staff.

If you see or hear about a conflict that could result in harm to a person or their belongings, please report to a supervisor.

Confidentiality

Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they are exposed while serving as a volunteer, whether this information involves staff, volunteers, customers, clients or other persons or involves overall city business. Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in some corrective action or termination of the volunteer's relationship with the city.

Requests for open records may be presented in writing following the requirements of the Texas Public Information Act, as observed by the City of Denton [Policy 504.01](#).

Insurance

DPARD maintains adequate coverage for services offered by the organization and its volunteers.

Evaluation

Volunteer evaluation is specific to each program. Program evaluation is a component of each volunteer evaluation. Surveys and reports are also utilized for program evaluation.

Publicity

Please direct all media inquiries to site supervisor or parksandrecreation@cityofdenton.com.

Use of Technology

Volunteers must use all DPARD technologies in a lawful, ethical, and professional manner. Training will be provided when the use of technology is required to complete assigned tasks. Confidentiality must be maintained when applicable.

Recognition

Volunteer recognition takes many forms and varies based on program and volunteer preference.

Record Management

Individual volunteer registrations and records will be managed through individual user accounts at www.dentonparks.com. DPARD staff will check-in volunteers for events and workdays. Volunteers and designated staff shall be responsible for updating all appropriate records and information in a timely and accurate fashion.

City of Denton Human Resources will maintain any documentation relating to pre-reporting requirements and background checks as specified in [Policy 409.07](#). To the extent permitted by law, volunteer records shall be treated with the same confidentiality as staff personnel records and shall be subject to open records in accordance with all applicable state laws.

Social Media Policy

Definition

DPARD recognizes that online communication tools such as weblogs ("blogs"), social networks (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram) and other online channels (chat rooms, bulletin boards, etc.), and virtual worlds (collectively "social media") increasingly serve as channels for direct interaction with community members, the media and other parties interested in our work. While DPARD encourages its volunteers to join in online conversation, DPARD expects its volunteers to exercise personal responsibility whenever they participate in social media. It is important for volunteers who choose to do so to know what is expected when they discuss DPARD.

- DPARD volunteers are personally responsible for the content they publish on blogs, wikis, or any other form of social media.
- Setting up a social media account on behalf of DPARD as an individual is prohibited.
- When communicating online as a DPARD volunteer, you must disclose yourself as such.
- Do not use profanity, derogatory language, personal attacks, or engage in unlawful harassment or any other conduct that is not acceptable in the DPARD workplace or that violates DPARD's policies.
- Blogging / social networking for personal or leisurely activities should not interfere with your volunteer work responsibilities.

Confidentiality & Proprietary Information

Volunteers may not disclose confidential and proprietary information about DPARD or the City of Denton. Proprietary information includes photographs taken in or on areas of City properties not accessible to the general public. Any photographs posted that depict DPARD staff, volunteers or event attendees should be carefully chosen to protect the privacy of the individuals depicted and minimize the potential for the image to be taken out of context. Get permission to cite or reference our staff or customers. Do not disclose or use any confidential business information about DPARD or personal information about volunteers, staff, customers or former or prospective employees. Respect all copyright, trademark, confidentiality, and financial disclosure laws.

Conduct

DPARD will not tolerate online conduct that is unethical, illegal, harassing, or defamatory. In addition, it is a violation of our policies to publish material which is critical of, or damaging to, DPARD, its staff, its partners, or its affiliates. Public trust in DPARD is critical to our goal of engaging the community. Your relationship with the recreation programmers, conversations with a Program Manager and email access to DPARD all provide ways for you to raise any concern you may have and be sure it is addressed; public criticism is not an appropriate way for volunteers to raise concerns.

Privacy

Even well-intentioned posts can be misinterpreted or taken out of context. Be thoughtful and use caution when posting. You should not assume any posting by you is or will remain anonymous. Remember that any posting is visible and accessible to the public, so you do not have an expectation of privacy in your postings. If you have any questions regarding this policy and its application or have any concerns about any volunteer behavior that may violate

this Policy, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator.

Violation

DPARD volunteers who fail to comply with this Policy may be subject to termination of their volunteer status. In addition, depending on the nature of the violation, participants may also be subject to civil and/or criminal penalties.

Conduct

By volunteering with DPARD, an individual agrees to the conduct outlined below. The following sections are not exhaustive and may not cover every situation or provide you with a set of absolute standards.

Respect

- Respect others even when I may not agree with them.
- Be courteous, friendly and cooperative.
- Maintain confidentiality
- Work toward the mission of DPARD
- Display courtesy, sensitivity, consideration, and compassion.
- Accept and follow the direction and decisions of DPARD Staff.
- Address conflicts and difficulties in an appropriate manner.
- Respect the property and resources of DPARD.

Self-Discipline

- Recognize your limitations and those of others.
- Set boundaries (know your limits both physically and otherwise).
- Hold yourself accountable for the commitments you undertake.
- Be responsible for your actions.
- Abstain from using DPARD affiliation for personal gain, promotion of partisan policies, or religious matters.
- Avoid conflicts of interest
- Follow the law

Communication

- Direct questions, comments and concerns to the appropriate person.
- Listen to the needs of others.
- Recognize that we communicate both verbally and non-verbally.
- Offer constructive feedback about DPARD and its' operations in an appropriate manner.

Commitment

- Respect that the DPARD staff count on me to honor my commitments.
- Follow through on commitments and contact the Program Coordinator if unable to work as scheduled.
- Work together with team members and other volunteers to meet DPARD goals.
- Complete tasks to the best of your ability.
- Be willing to learn and take part in additional training sessions.

Welfare

- Value your role in the maintenance and growth of the organization

- Strive to promote a positive work environment
- Respect and support all people

Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest may be present in a situation where an individual is mutually vested in DPARD and a third party to the point that impartiality may be compromised. A volunteer who believes they may have a conflict of interest should (a) disclose the conflict/potential conflict, and (b) abstain from voting on any matter in which there is a conflict.

Grievance Procedure

Please bring all matters that you feel require attention to the program coordinator of assigned activity. If the matter is not resolved satisfactorily, please contact the DPARD Assistant Director at (940) 349-7469 or Laura.behrens@CityofDenton.com.

Termination

The City of Denton and DPARD reserves the right to end a volunteer relationship at any time for any or no reason. In the event of termination, the volunteer will receive notice in writing and may request further discussion.

All active volunteers must resubmit all required forms and documents listed in this directive *at least* every three (3) years. Department heads have the discretion to require resubmission more often depending on the business needs of the department/division.

Any person who has not participated as a volunteer in the preceding twelve months must re-submit all required forms and documentation.

Court Ordered Community Service

DPARD verifies court ordered community service hours for most minor offenses, ages 18+.

Excluded offenses include, but are not limited to, anything related to assault, theft, and crimes against a minor.

Registration

Contact the center at which you wish to complete community service to verify eligibility and complete registration paperwork. Registration is required to be completed in person. Registrations do not carry forward, you must seek approval and complete the process for each new court order.

By choosing DPARD to complete court ordered community service, you agree to:

- Follow all policies as outline in this handbook.
- Begin work within one week of approval, unless approved by community service (CS) coordinator.
- Sign up to work at least once during an eight-week period.
- Sign up for no more than a four-hour period, unless approved by CS site coordinator.
- Not sign-up at the same time as someone else.
- Arrive on time for scheduled shift.
- Notify staff as soon as possible if unable to make your scheduled time.
- Late arrival more than 15 minutes without notice, may be sent home.

Dress Code

Most community service assignments include daily cleaning and straightening of the facility. Occasionally outdoor tasks will be assigned. Dress in comfortable attire and closed toe shoes.

Please remember you will be working with and around the public where young children may be present. Clothes may not depict alcohol or cigarette ads, adult themes, etc. No sagging, short shorts or midriff tops.

Conduct

- The use of alcohol, tobacco, recreational drugs is prohibited
- Loud and obscene language will not be tolerated
- Friends or family members may not accompany or visit during court appointed service hours
- The use of a personal cell phone is prohibited while working
- Use of the center phone must be requested with staff and only in the event of an emergency or calling for a ride

Breaks

DPARD follows guidelines as set forth by the probation courts regarding breaks and time recorded. Only time worked may be recorded. If scheduled more than four hours, a break will be provided and recorded appropriately on your timesheet. Breaks for tobacco use are prohibited when completing community service hours.

Termination

Being provided an opportunity to complete community service hours in a DPARD facility is a privilege. The recreation center staff on-duty has the right to ask a court appointed volunteer to leave in the event of any policy violations. DPARD reserves the right to end the volunteer relationship at any time. In the event of termination, the volunteer will receive notice in writing and may request further discussion if deemed appropriate.

Failure to report for a scheduled shift three times, without calling, will result in termination and paperwork will be sent back to the probation officer.

Program Staff and Contact Information

Parks and Rec Administrative Offices

901 Texas St. Denton, TX 76209

Athletics	Rachael Burks
Denia Rec. Center	Robbie Johnson
Denton Civic Center	Megan Doughty
Denton Natatorium	Monica Martin
Denton Senior Center	Nicole Brasher
Martin Luther King Junior Rec. Center	Cheyron Brown
North Lakes Rec. Center	Alicia McDaniel
Special Events	Arianna Bencid