



**Parks and Leisure
Services**

VOLUNTEER IN PARKS HANDBOOK

EFFECTIVE JUNE 1, 2011



Volunteer In Parks Handbook

V.I.P. Purpose

To promote citizen participation in the expansion, enhancement and delivery of quality services to the citizens of Temple.

Goals

- 1** To enhance City services by utilizing volunteers to compliment the efforts of the Parks and Leisure Services staff.
- 2** To foster the spirit of citizen initiative and voluntary action among business, industries, and individual citizens in the community.
- 3** To identify untapped human, technical, and material resources that can be utilized for the public good through citizen initiative and voluntary actions.
- 4** To improve the quality of life through expanded City services without additional taxation.

Volunteer Expectations

- To have a clear, written set of expectations. This applies to all volunteers, as well as long-term volunteers.
- To be treated as a co-worker with the department.
- To be treated as a member of a team committed to excellence in carrying out the department's mission.
- To be given as much information about the department as is reasonable to provide.
- To have a job assignment consistent with the skills, motivation, and level of responsibility appropriate to each volunteer.
- To receive adequate initial and continuing training to empower the individual to achieve excellence in job performance.
- To have a meaningful and rewarding volunteer experience.
- To have a regular evaluation of job performance. Volunteers will be evaluated by their on-site supervisor or contact person on a quarterly basis.
- To have a regular evaluation of volunteer program. Volunteers will be asked to evaluate the program on a quarterly basis.
- To be recognized for all contributions.



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Customer Service

One of the major responsibilities of your volunteerism will be to promote and maintain good public relations. All City of Temple Parks and Leisure Services Department personnel shall always display behavior and attitudes towards the public, which exemplify professionalism and consideration. Good customer service will enhance the image of the department. The department customer service standards will be provided to you. Every effort should be made to follow those standards. Below is a list of a few helpful hints about good customer service.

In Person

- a. **Smile:** Remember that a friendly and efficient service earns respect for you and the City. Be genuinely interested and empathetic in handling all requests and problems that are brought to you. There are no “foolish questions” or trivial complaints.
- b. If a problem arises, **NEVER** lose your temper in public, no matter how extreme the circumstances. Keep a level head at all times of adversity and duress.
- c. Calmly explain the rule or procedure which applies to the situation, or ask a Parks and Leisure Services employee to assist you.
- d. Arguments accomplish nothing. If you cannot handle a complaint cheerfully or have trouble talking to a particularly irate citizen, turn the matter over to the Parks and Leisure Services employee.
- e. If you leave someone, be sure he/she knows why and for how long. Unexplained delays look like stalling tactics and are ineffective.
- f. If you do not know the answer to a citizen’s request, refer him/her to the person or department who can answer it.
- g. Learn as much as possible about the City of Temple. The public might want information about other city departments and it is best to be prepared to correctly field these questions. By doing so, you are truly giving the public expert service while enhancing your own image.

By Telephone

- a. The impression you make over the telephone is a lasting one, so always give friendly, cordial service. Answer all calls promptly.
- b. Identify your department and yourself immediately.



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- c. Speak clearly and naturally, and be prompt and courteous. Refer caller to the proper person or department if they do not know who to contact. Ask to take a message if the person requested is unavailable.
- d. Always politely end the conversation before hanging up.

Attitude

Always exemplify warmth, politeness, and interest in the public. Avoid looking bored. Since we all work together, we can only be efficient and thorough if we work in harmony. No one is born polite, but we all can learn and it pays off in making work go faster while adding enjoyment to our lives. Above all else, be polite.

Brochures

- a. Four times a year, (January-March, April-June, July-August, September-December) the Department will publish our programming brochure, Play By Play, to inform the public on all upcoming programs and events.
- b. Volunteers should familiarize themselves with the brochure, and be prepared to field all questions from the public concerning program activities.
- c. Have brochures out in a conspicuous place with easy access to all.
- d. Staff might be retained to help distribute brochures throughout the community upon publication.
- e. Additional calendars and specific facility information can be located at each facility. Please familiarize yourself with these publications.

Dress Code and Appearance

Each division has its own dress code. Dressing accordingly is the volunteer's responsibility. All volunteers who have contact with the public will strive to present a professional image with no immodest or unconventional manner of dress. An unprofessional image can include and not be limited to; tank tops, warm up suits and visible cleavage. Please follow the facility or event guidelines for dress & appearance.

The Department will provide each volunteer with an identification badge or t-shirt to be used whenever you will be serving with the Parks and Leisure Services Department.



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Safety – Volunteer Responsibilities

The Parks and Leisure Services Department takes pride in providing services, programs and facilities that are clean, attractive, and safe. All who work in these programs are expected to help maintain high standards of safe work habits. The City does, however, make provisions for any staff or volunteer who is injured while in the performance of assigned duties. If you are injured while performing your assigned volunteer work, report immediately to your supervisor. If medical treatment is required, it will be provided by doctors and health care facilities authorized by the City. Injury and accident forms are provided in any Parks and Leisure Services Office.

All volunteers bear a certain amount of responsibility in any safety program. You must be aware that your actions, mental state, physical condition, and attitude directly affect the safety of yourself and others. All volunteers will:

1. Know your duties, follow instructions, and think before you act.
2. Use your protective equipment (eye protection, hard hats, gloves, etc.) as the job requires.
3. Work according to good safety practices as posted, instructed, and/or discussed.
4. Refrain from any unsafe act that might endanger you or fellow volunteers.
5. Use all safety devices provided for your protection.
6. Report any unsafe situation or act to your supervisor immediately.
7. Assume responsibility for thoughtless or deliberate acts that may cause injury to you or your fellow volunteers.
8. Never operate equipment that you are unfamiliar with or not trained to use. Any equipment that is defective, or in need of repair, shall not be used and must be reported to your supervisor.
9. Report all accidents/incidents to your supervisor as soon as they occur.

Timesheets

Record keeping is an important part of the overall program evaluation and requires accurate, up-to-date information. Service records will be maintained for each volunteer and will include type of assignment, work performed, hours served, and training attended. This documentation will serve as the basis for a monthly accounting for volunteer activities within the Parks and Leisure Services Department. Each volunteer is asked to assist in this process by signing in for activities and listing hours worked each time he/she is scheduled. These records can be used by volunteers to help document work experience, or just personal satisfaction. All department volunteers are required to complete a time sheet. It is very important that you verify the number of hours you are volunteering and that you sign your time sheet. Time sheets are due by the 5th of every month to your immediate supervisor.



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Holidays

The City of Temple observes the following holidays:

New Year's Day
Martin Luther King Birthday
President's Day
Good Friday
Memorial Day
Independence Day (July 4)
Labor Day
Columbus Day
Veteran's Day
Thanksgiving Day
Day after Thanksgiving
Christmas Eve
Christmas Day

Official holidays that fall on a Saturday will be observed on the preceding Friday. Official holidays that fall on a Sunday will be observed on the following Monday.

Some Parks and Leisure Services Department facilities may remain open during these holidays. Please check with your immediate supervisor for specific holiday closing schedules.

Absenteeism & Tardiness

Volunteer staff is expected to be prompt in reporting for assigned duties. If you find that you will be late, or will be unable to report, notify your immediate supervisor as early as possible.

The attendance record of volunteers shall be continually evaluated by their immediate supervisor. Excessive absenteeism is not acceptable and dismissal from the Volunteer In Parks Program can occur. **Excessive absenteeism is defined as three or more instances of *unscheduled* absence in any six month period.**

Workplace Harassment

The City of Temple and the Parks and Leisure Services Department does not tolerate harassment of volunteers or others based on, or related to, sex, race, national origin, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or other group factors. Volunteers must report incidents of harassment against themselves, or observed acts of harassment against others, to their immediate supervisor, Department Director or Human Resources.



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Smoking Policy and Tobacco Use Policy

Smoking and use of tobacco products is prohibited in all City owned and operated buildings, in accordance with City of Temple Ordinance regarding such. City Volunteers are not permitted to smoke or use tobacco products while on duty. Periodic breaks for the purpose of using tobacco will be allowed out of public view.

Cell Phone Use

We ask that our volunteers please keep personal cell phone use to a minimum.

Drug-Free Workplace

The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, sale, or use of alcohol or drugs in the workplace or while engaged in city business is strictly prohibited.

Guidelines for Internet, Computer

Department volunteers should refrain from using city computers and internet.

Recycling

We support environmental awareness by encouraging recycling and waste management in business practices and operating procedures. This support includes a commitment to the purchase, use, and disposal of products and materials in a manner that will best utilize natural resources and minimize any negative impact on the earth's environment.

Suggestion Program

Department volunteers have the opportunity to contribute to our future success and growth by submitting suggestions for practical work-improvement or cost-saving ideas. All volunteers are encouraged to participate in the suggestion program. Suggestions should be submitted to your division manager. If you have questions or need advice about your idea, contact your supervisor for help.



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Volunteer Incentives & Recognition

To acknowledge volunteers for their assistance to the City of Temple, Parks and Leisure Services Department and the community, special recognition and service awards are given each calendar year for volunteer hours acquired from June – May. All volunteers will receive one of the following awards listed below. Volunteers with more than 100 hours will also be invited to the Volunteer Appreciation Banquet. Service awards are non-transferable and non-exchangeable.

Exceptional Volunteer Service: Nominated by the supervisor, one volunteer is recognized each quarter in Play By Play for outstanding service to the department.

Future Reference: More and more employers are recognizing the value of volunteer experience.

Hours of Service Awards

0 - 9 hours of service	Letter of Appreciation
10 - 100 hours of service	Volunteer Appreciation Banquet
100 - 300 hours of service	<u>Choice of One:</u> One Week Summit Membership Free Class or Program (up to \$25.00) Free Race Entry
300 - 500 hours of service	<u>Choice of One:</u> Sammons Park Indoor Pool – Punch Card Mayborn Convention Center – 2 Public Event Tickets
500 - 1,000 hours of service	<u>Choice of One:</u> Free Pavilion Rental The Grill at Sammons – Lunch & Beverage for 2 (no alcohol) Free Class or Program (up to \$49.00)

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Comprehensive information about the Parks & Leisure Services Department
 Volunteer Program Policies and Procedures is available at:
templeparks.com

City of Temple
 Parks & Leisure Services
 1909 Curtis B. Elliott Dr.
 Temple, TX 76501
 (254) 298-5690