CITY OF GEORGETOWN
PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Garey Park

VOLUNTEER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

Georgetown, Texas
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Welcome!

We extend our warmest welcome to you as a member of the City of Georgetown Parks and Recreation Volunteer family. By becoming a volunteer, you play a part in achieving Georgetown Parks and Recreation’s goal of providing recreation opportunities through parks, facilities and programs to enhance our community’s quality of life. By volunteering, you will enhance Georgetown Parks’ ability to foster understanding and enjoyment of the natural and cultural heritage of Garey Park. Thank you for taking the time to volunteer. We are glad you are here!

I. Purpose

The purpose of this manual is to provide overall guidance, structure and direction to staff and volunteers throughout the volunteer process. These policies do not constitute, either implicitly or explicitly, a binding contractual or personnel agreement. The City of Georgetown Parks and Recreation Department reserves the right to change any of these policies at any time and to expect adherence to the changed policy.

II. Mission Statement

**Georgetown Recreation Mission Statement:**
To create an environment that provides opportunities for positive experiences and personal growth.

**Georgetown Parks Mission Statement:**
To take pride in creating and preserving outdoor spaces that everyone can enjoy.

The goal of the City of Georgetown Parks and Recreation Department Volunteer Program is to actively promote a mutually rewarding relationship between volunteers who offer their talents, skills and time who will support them in their efforts to cooperatively foster stewardship of our community’s parks, natural areas, and recreation and social programs.

The City of Georgetown is best served by the active participation of its citizens in all aspects of community life. Through involvement in civic, environmental and special event activities, as well as recreation, our citizens of all ages learn more about their City while forming strong bonds with one another. To this end, the City of Georgetown Parks and Recreation Department accepts and encourages the involvement of volunteers within all appropriate programs and activities.
III. Rights and Responsibilities

A. Relationship Between Volunteer and City

Volunteers are viewed as a valuable resource to the City, its staff, and its residents. Volunteers shall be extended the right to be given meaningful assignments, the right to be treated as respected co-workers, the right to effective supervision, the right to appropriate involvement and participation, and the right to recognition for work done.

In return, volunteers shall agree to actively perform their duties to the best of their abilities and to remain loyal to the mission statement, goals, and procedures of the City of Georgetown and the Georgetown Parks and Recreation Department; conducting themselves in a courteous and respectful manner while interacting with staff, volunteers, and the general public.

B. Definition of Volunteer

A volunteer is anyone, whom without compensation, performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of the Department. Volunteers shall not be considered as employees of the City of Georgetown.

C. Screening of Volunteers

To volunteer for Georgetown Parks and Recreation, you must first complete an application. An orientation and training session will follow, with a liability form and completion of a criminal background check. Once cleared, volunteer participation can ensue. (The criminal background check will be renewed for on-going volunteers).

Where volunteers are to be driving City vehicles or placed in direct contact with at-risk clients, such as those working with children under the age of 18, developmentally disabled persons, the frail, or the elderly additional screening procedures will be instituted. These procedures may include driving record checks, reference checks, direct background investigation, and/or criminal investigation to check for history of abuse and/or sexual deviant behavior or other crimes of violence. These checks will be filed and renewed every year for on-going volunteers whose jobs require these types of checks. All volunteers to be placed with at-risk clients shall submit adequate information to allow the City to conduct these checks. Volunteers who refuse permission to conduct these checks or who fail to submit the prior information will not be accepted for placement with these clients.
IV. Recruitment and Training of Volunteers

A. Recruitment

Volunteers shall be recruited by the City on a pro-active 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, gender, age, marital status, sexual preference, and/or disability. Volunteers may be recruited either through an interest in specific functions or through a general interest in volunteering which will later be matched with a specific function.

Volunteers who have not reached the age of 18 must have written consent and liability from a parent or legal guardian prior to volunteering. Volunteers 15 years of age and younger must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian while volunteering.

Georgetown Parks and Recreation supports the Americans with Disabilities Act by making reasonable accommodations in serving individuals with disabilities. If accommodations are needed requests should be made at least one week in advance by calling the Volunteer Coordinator at 512.930.6803.

B. Orientation

Prior to being assigned or appointed to a position, all volunteers will need to attend a volunteer orientation, so that the supervisor or volunteer coordinator may ascertain their suitability for and interest in a position. This will help to determine the qualifications of the volunteer, his or her commitment to fulfill the requirements of the volunteer position, and provide an opportunity for the volunteer to ask questions. Supervising staff will participate in orientation and placement of volunteers whenever possible. Final assignment of a potential volunteer will be reviewed and approved by the appropriate supervisor.

C. Placement

In placing a volunteer, consideration shall be paid to the interests and capabilities of the volunteer and to the requirements of the volunteer position. No placement shall be made unless the needs of both the volunteer and the supervising staff can be met. Volunteers should be provided with a description of general volunteer duties and when needed, a scope of work description so there is complete understanding of the expectations of their service.
D. Acceptance

Service as a volunteer with the Georgetown Parks and Recreation Department shall begin with acceptance to a volunteer position by a supervisor or volunteer coordinator. No volunteer shall begin performance of any position until he or she has been officially accepted for volunteer work and has completed all the necessary screening and paperwork. At the time of final acceptance, each volunteer shall complete any further enrollment paperwork and receive a copy of the volunteer manual.

E. Professional Services

Volunteers shall not perform professional services for which certification or licensing is required unless currently certified or licensed to do so. A copy of such certificate or license must be on file with the Volunteer Coordinator.

F. Orientation

All volunteers will receive a general orientation on the nature and operation of the volunteer program and a specific orientation on the purposes and requirements of the volunteer work that they are accepting in that effort.

G. On-the-Job Training

The City will provide adequate instruction and, where necessary, training to ensure all workers perform a task properly and safely, and provide individual volunteers with adequate knowledge of City rules and requirements. The timing and methods for delivery of such training should be appropriate to the complexity and demands of the positions and the capabilities of the volunteers. Experienced volunteers may be included in the design and delivery of volunteer orientation and training. Those staff that will be in a supervisory capacity for volunteers shall have primary responsibility for design and delivery of on-the-job training to volunteers assigned to them.

V. Expectations

A. General Job Duties and Expectations

Volunteers may be utilized in many programs and activities of the Parks and Recreation Department at Garey Park, and serve at appropriate levels of skill as determined by the Volunteer Coordinator. In addition to initial orientation and this manual, volunteers can expect to receive site or activity-specific orientation and job training.
Volunteer Qualifications & Abilities Needed:

- Appreciation of natural resources, agriculture, gardening, cultural history or other related focuses.
- Ability to work effectively with the public, other volunteers, and staff.
- Being a team player; support your volunteer group, Georgetown Parks and Recreation staff, and other volunteer groups.
- Time, interest and a commitment to work toward EXCELLENCE with Georgetown Parks and Recreation.
- An open mind, flexibility and willingness to learn and try new things.

B. General City Policies

While performing assignments for the City of Georgetown Parks and Recreation Department, all volunteers are expected to follow City of Georgetown policies, procedures and guidelines; consult with your volunteer coordinator for applicable information.

C. Attendance

Volunteers are expected to perform their duties as scheduled. If expecting to be absent from a scheduled duty, volunteers shall inform the supervising staff and/or Volunteer Supervisor as far in advance as possible so that alternative arrangements may be made.

Volunteer schedules are created to ensure appropriate ratios for supervision. It is important that you show up for your shift ready to work. If, however, you are unable to fulfill your shift, the following procedures should be followed. You must discuss any shift changes with your Supervisor and/or Coordinator. The Volunteer Supervisor or Coordinator must approve any shift changes.

If you are unable to come to work due to illness, injury, or an emergency, you should make every attempt to contact your Volunteer Supervisor as soon as possible. If no contact is made, then you should contact the next highest level supervisor over the facility at which were to volunteer. If necessary, a doctor’s note may be requested before you may return to work. Contagious illnesses should be taken seriously and measures should be taken to limit the exposure of the illness to other volunteers.

Volunteers may resign from volunteer service with the Department at any time. The notification may take place verbally or in writing. In order to maintain a successful volunteer program, the volunteer coordinator or staff person will
conduct a brief exit interview to determine the volunteer’s satisfaction with the volunteer program and suggestions for improvement.

D. Right to Reject Services/Termination

The City reserves the right to limit the use of volunteers, adjust the hours of any volunteer or to reject services as it, in its sole discretion, deems fit, in order to best achieve its public purpose and policy. No employment of any other contractual right is created by these policies. Participation in any volunteer position of the Department shall be open to any individual and no individual shall be discriminated against based upon race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin or physical, mental or sensory handicap, or on the basis of any other characteristic protected by law. Grounds for rejecting services may include, but are not limited to: unsatisfactory background check, gross misconduct or insubordination, being under the influence of alcohol or drugs, theft of property, misuse of City equipment or materials, mistreatment of clients or co-workers, failure to abide by City policies and procedures, failure to meet the standards of performance relating to the essential functions of the volunteer position, and/or failure to satisfactorily perform assigned duties.

E. Dress Code

As representatives of Georgetown Parks and Recreation Department, volunteers, like staff, are responsible for presenting a good image to clients and to the community. Volunteers shall dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties. Volunteers are to be identified as such through wearing designated attire provided by Georgetown Parks and Recreation.

Volunteers may be required to wear designated attire when working. For example, volunteers assisting with events at the Garey House and park maintenance may have additional dress code requirements.

All other attire must be appropriate for the work environment:

1. Shoes must be appropriate for the activity, as determined by the volunteer supervisor.

2. Any clothing, including hats and visors, may not display inappropriate slogans or advertisements. This includes, but is not limited to, alcohol ads or logos, musical groups, religious depictions or symbols, and foul language. Inappropriateness of clothing may be determined by the Volunteer Supervisor.
F. No Smoking Policy

All City of Georgetown facilities and vehicles have been designated smoke-free. Smoking may occur in the designated area outside of the Garey House.

G. Social Media

Volunteers are prohibited from taking any pictures or videos of the public unless specifically requested to do so by their Volunteer Supervisor for marketing purposes. Additionally, volunteers are prohibited from posting or sharing pictures or videos on any social media platform, and from transmitting any image of the public/park users between themselves and any other person.

Use of the Internet, email, and online research has great potential to enhance the productivity of some volunteer jobs. At the same time, misuse is possible. Volunteers will be held accountable for their use of City of Georgetown resources.

H. Media Communications Policy

If a representative from the media shows up without appointment, volunteers should meet/greet the media and find out what information they are seeking. Volunteers should refer media requests to staff. Do not speak with the media regarding emergency or crisis situations. All requests under these circumstances must be referred to staff.

ALL CONTACT WITH THE MEDIA SHOULD BE IMMEDIATELY REPORTED TO THE VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR OR SUPERVISOR.

I. Public Speaking

A Garey Park volunteer, when speaking in public forums or to news media concerning events not directly related to the volunteer program, shall speak only as a private individual and not as a representative of Georgetown Parks and Recreation. When a volunteer represents Garey Park he/she shall present things in a positive manner, uphold the values and philosophy of Georgetown Parks and Recreation and use discretionary judgment when providing information.

J. Logging Time/Scheduling a Shift

Georgetown Parks and Recreation uses WhentoHelp to register and schedule volunteer shifts. Once you are accepted into the Volunteer Program you will be given a link to the calendar and instructed on how to schedule your volunteer times as well as access your information through WhentoHelp.
Volunteers are responsible for signing in when beginning service and signing out when service is completed each day at the appropriate designated location.

The Activity Log will be used to provide a record of the daily activities of the Volunteer Program volunteers and for statistical purposes to evaluate and improve the program and volunteers. The Activity Log is an official department document that is subject to a public records request and may not be altered without approval of the Volunteer Coordinator.

K. Facility and Equipment Use

Each Supervisor shall address specific use and storage of equipment, and facility rules, during training.

1. All equipment should always be used with care. If equipment becomes dirty or requires cleaning after an activity, it is the responsibility of the volunteer member using the equipment to return the equipment to its original condition and location.

2. If any equipment is damaged and poses a safety issue, it should be immediately taken out of service and a Volunteer Supervisor be notified as soon as possible.

3. Any facility issue observed by volunteers should also be reported to the Volunteer Supervisor immediately.

4. Volunteers are expected to supervise proper use of facility and equipment during their shifts.

VI. Safety and Emergency Procedures

The safety and welfare of volunteers is of paramount importance. Accepted common sense standards of behavior will be outlined prior to the performance of volunteer tasks/assignments. Supervisors and staff are trained in basic First Aid and CPR.

A. Minor Injury: offer person or parent/guardian a first aid box for self-treatment and offer to call 9-1-1, if they so choose. Record person’s name, address, phone number, nature of injury; date, time, location where injury occurred; and whether the person elected to call 9-1-1. If a minor is involved, also record name, address, and phone number of adult with minor. This information should be submitted to Garey Park staff and an incident report filled out for documentation.
B. Emergency Action Plan: it is the responsibility of staff to ensure the safety of all volunteers during an emergency. Each volunteer supervisor will provide volunteers with information regarding the Emergency Action Plan (EAP) for that facility or area.

VII. City Vehicle Transportation

Vehicles should only be used by Georgetown Parks and Recreation volunteers when deemed necessary by the designated Volunteer Supervisor to conduct official business or to conduct activities directly related to the volunteer program. In such cases, the volunteer must:

1. Be at least 18 years of age, have a valid driver’s license, comply with the City’s Drug and Alcohol Free Environment Policy #710, and maintain a safe driving record.

2. Complete training on Georgetown Parks and Recreation vehicle usage policies (including proper mobile radio procedures) and training specific to the vehicle(s) they will operate.

3. Adhere to the city driving policy and requirements related to accidents and moving violations.

If the event of an accident, the volunteer will need to complete a drug screening and a driver’s license check. (The volunteer will be covered under Texas Municipal League if there is any damage to the property).

VIII. Supervision and Evaluation of Volunteers

A. Supervision of Volunteers

Each volunteer with the Parks and Recreation Department must have a clearly identified supervisor who is responsible for direct management of that volunteer. This supervisor may be a staff person, a trained adult volunteer, or other designated person. This supervisor shall be responsible for day-to-day management and guidance of the work of the volunteer, and shall be available to the volunteer for consultation and assistance. An adult must supervise minors 15 years of age and younger.
B. Volunteer/Staff Relationships

Volunteers and staff are considered to be partners in implementing the mission and programs of the Department, with each having a complementary role to play. It is essential for the proper operation of this relationship that each partner understands and respects the needs and abilities of the other.

C. Lines of Communication

Volunteers are entitled to all information pertinent to the performance of their work assignments. Lines of communication operate in both directions, and exist both formally and informally. Volunteers should be consulted regarding decisions that would substantially affect the performance of their duties. The volunteer coordinator shall be informed of any substantial change in the work or status of a volunteer.

IX. Volunteer Support and Recognition

A. Access to City Property and Materials

As appropriate, volunteers shall have access to City of Georgetown Parks and Recreation property and materials necessary to fulfill their duties, and shall receive training in the operation of any equipment. All City property shall be returned at the end of a volunteer shift.

B. Insurance

Volunteers engaged in approved volunteer activities are covered by volunteer accident and liability policies. These policies provide excess coverage for expenses not covered by the volunteer’s own insurance.

Please notify staff, your supervisor, or the volunteer coordinator immediately if you are injured or involved in an accident while performing volunteer duties for Georgetown Parks and Recreation. Volunteers (or their parents or guardians, if volunteer is a minor) are required to sign a liability waiver before volunteering.

C. Annual Recognition Event

An annual volunteer recognition event will be held to highlight and reward the contributions of volunteers to the City of Georgetown Parks and Recreation Department.
D. Informal Recognition

Thank you letters, e-mails and/or verbal thanks are to be given to all volunteers as appropriate. All staff and volunteers responsible for volunteer supervision are encouraged to undertake on-going methods of recognition of volunteer service on a regular basis throughout the year.

E. Volunteer Development

Volunteers are encouraged to develop their skills while serving with the Georgetown Parks and Recreation Department. If so desired by the volunteer, the Department shall assist the volunteer in maintaining appropriate records of volunteer experience that would assist the volunteer in future career opportunities, both paid and volunteer. Letters of recommendation for college and/or employment fall in this category.

X. Confidentiality

Respecting the privacy of our clients, members, staff, and volunteers of Georgetown Parks and Recreation itself is a basic value of our organization. Personal and financial information is confidential and should not be disclosed or discussed with anyone.

Volunteers of Georgetown Parks and Recreation may be exposed to information which is confidential and/or privileged and proprietary in nature. It is the policy of Georgetown Parks and Recreation that such information must be kept confidential both during and after volunteer service.

Unauthorized disclosure of confidential or privileged information is a serious violation of this policy and will subject the person(s) who made the unauthorized disclosure to appropriate discipline, including removal/dismissal of the volunteer program.