



# *Volunteer Handbook*

# Welcome to the City of Clearwater Parks and Recreation Department Volunteer Program

The City of Clearwater's Parks and Recreation Department encourages volunteer participation by individuals and groups in Parks and Recreation divisions, facilities, and events. This Handbook has been produced to help you become better informed Clearwater Parks & Recreation volunteers. This manual will share with you a little of our philosophy, practices, and policies, as well as the benefits we will provide to you as a valued volunteer.

No volunteer handbook can answer all the questions you might have about our program, but we hope this handbook will allow you to feel comfortable with us. We depend on you; your success is our success. Please don't hesitate to ask questions. Your volunteer coordinator will gladly answer them. We hope you will enjoy your volunteer work and make new friends of your fellow volunteers. We want this to be a positive experience for you!

## Volunteer Program Mission Statement

To assist with and improve parks and recreation programs, services, facilities and beautification by recruiting, training and retaining volunteers from the local community.

## The Parks and Recreation Volunteer Program is committed to:

- Offering you a positive and worthwhile experience.
- Offering a wide variety of opportunities and flexible schedules for all volunteers.
- Offering local students a variety of opportunities to earn education service hours and complete projects, such as Bright Futures and Eagle Badges.
- Completing a local law enforcement background check and Florida Sexual Offender check on all registered, long-term volunteers or anyone working with children.
- Insuring the safety of all volunteers, staff and citizens who interact with us.
- Acknowledging the efforts and time of all volunteers through various means of appreciation.
- Accepting students, adults, individuals, groups, businesses and other community organizations that wish to give their time and talents to improve the City of Clearwater and its Parks and Recreation services, facilities and programs.
- Treating all volunteers equally regardless of age, sex, color, race, national origin, religious preference, political beliefs, or disabilities that do not prohibit performance of volunteer.



## The Parks and Recreation Volunteer Program expects all volunteers to:

- Completely fill out and submit an application, including a local law enforcement background check and an Affidavit of Good Moral Character, when required.
- Treat all volunteers and staff with respect. We are all members of the same team and need to work together. If you are not getting along with a fellow volunteer please approach the Volunteer Coordinator or staff representative for a change of duty or location. If you have issues with a staff member please contact the Volunteer Coordinator.

**Remember: Treat people the way you wish to be treated...**

- Practice good customer service skills. While volunteering with us you are a representative of the City of Clearwater and should act accordingly. If you run into problems with an irate customer please contact staff or Police to handle the situation.

**“A dissatisfied customer tells 22 people; a satisfied customer tells 8 people...”**

**—Ford Motor Company Executive**

- Be accepting and flexible when it comes to job duties and stations. Due to unexpected circumstances you may be asked to change your original job duty. Examples: short staffed in an area because some one does not show up, an area is added at the last minute or an area is busier or slower than expected.
- Provide feedback. This helps us to improve our program, fix issues and respond to your changing needs.
- Please do not smoke, eat or take cell phone calls at your job site during your volunteer shift. All volunteers should take a break, this is when they can eat, smoke and/or take phone calls in another area. If you are not able to take a break please ask the Volunteer Coordinator or staff representative.
- **Absolutely no alcohol consumption BEFORE OR DURING your volunteer shift.** If you wish to purchase and consume an alcoholic beverage at an event please wait until your shift is over and remove your volunteer tag and/or any other indication that you are involved with the City.
- Come to every assignment ready to serve and complete the duties assigned. If you are volunteering solely to see a free show or gain free admission to an event you will need to purchase a ticket.
- **Sign in and check out for every assignment so that staff knows your area is covered or you have left for the night. Please do not leave an assigned area without having a replacement or notifying staff.**
- Most importantly....enjoy yourself and leave with a sense of accomplishment every time you volunteer with us!!



# **Volunteer Program Policies and Procedures**

## **Standards of Conduct**

By accepting to volunteer with the Clearwater Parks & Recreation Department you have a responsibility to your fellow volunteers and the patrons you are working with to provide a safe and pleasant environment. The Clearwater Parks & Recreation Department maintains a list of policies, which we expect our volunteers to follow. Failure to heed any of these policies can be grounds for dismissal from the volunteer program.

## **Substance Abuse**

The City of Clearwater Parks & Recreation Department prohibits the possession, sale or use of any mood altering substance, including alcohol, while volunteering. This is a violation of safe work practices and grounds for immediate dismissal from the volunteer program.



## **Background Check**

All prospective volunteers for Clearwater Parks & Recreation will be required to submit to a local law background check prior to acceptance as a volunteer. Individuals who refuse to comply with this request will not be accepted as a volunteer. A signed consent for release of information (Local Law Enforcement Check Form) must be obtained from the prospective volunteer prior to a request for a background check. An Affidavit of Good Moral Character must also be signed and submitted with the background check form, if working one on one with children. All recreation center volunteers must be approved before beginning to volunteer.

## **Equal Volunteering Opportunity**

Clearwater Parks and Recreation Department provides volunteering opportunities for all individuals regardless of age, sex, color, race, national origin, religious preference, political beliefs, or disabilities that do not prohibit performance of volunteer. All matters relating to volunteering are based upon the individuals ability to perform the volunteer task, as well as, dependability and reliability.

## **Vehicles & Parking**

The City of Clearwater will not pay for loss or damage to your vehicle to and from volunteer assignment or while parked during the volunteer assignment. The City of Clearwater expects volunteers to carry insurance on their own motor vehicles covering liability and all property damage. The City of Clearwater does not validate parking. All volunteers are responsible for arranging their own transportation to and from the assignment and finding appropriate parking.

## **Harassment**

The City of Clearwater Parks & Recreation Department intends to provide a volunteer environment that is pleasant, comfortable and free from intimidation, hostility or other offenses which might interfere with volunteer performance. Harassment of any sort; verbal, physical or visual will not be tolerated. **Note:** Harassment can take many forms, such as but not limited to, words, jokes, signs, pranks, intimidation, physical contact or violence.



## Dress Code

Personal appearance should be a matter of concern for each volunteer. Volunteers shall be neat and clean in their person and attire when volunteering. Take your lead from the staff and dress appropriately for the task you are performing.

## Special Event Policies:

### Tips Policy

Individual volunteers are **not allowed** to keep tips and take them home. There will be an official tip jar placed in all coke wagons manned by individual volunteers. All tips collected **must** be turned into the Volunteer Coordinator to be placed in an account, which supplies incentives, parties and other nice things for our volunteers. **Anyone caught removing tips or any money will not be invited back to volunteer.** No exceptions!

### Coke Wagon Procedures

Volunteers **may not** drink the products stocked in the coke wagons. All of these bottles are inventoried and tracked. Volunteers **may not** give vendors free coke products either. Vendors **must pay** for their cokes and water. Any volunteer caught trading coke products for food from a vendor will not be invited back to volunteer.

### No Eating, Smoking or Cell Phones in work area

The Events and Festivals staff request that volunteers not eat, smoke or use their cell phones at their assigned area. The Health Department prohibits staff from eating or smoking in an active vending area and we must abide by their rules. We consider these practices, including cell phone use, unprofessional. All volunteers should be taking breaks to eat and use the restroom during their shifts. You may find an alternate location on your break to smoke and/or make calls. Please make sure you speak with someone to insure you get your break. You are welcome to eat out in the park and enjoy the show a bit, but we request that you do not bring food back to your work area. **ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION BEFORE OR DURING YOUR SHIFT IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED.**

### Assigned Areas

We do our best to place all volunteers in their requested areas. Sometimes there are circumstances that surprise us like a volunteer who does not show up or an area getting busier than we expected. In these cases it is often necessary to take volunteers from one area and place them where we need them most. Please understand that we rely on your flexibility and you may be asked to work in a different area than you requested. Volunteers must be willing to go where needed or our event will not be as successful.



### Worker's Compensation:

Volunteers are eligible for Worker's Compensation as provided by law. In case of an accident, please notify your supervisor immediately. The City of Clearwater is self-insured for Worker's Compensation. The contact in case of injury is the City of Clearwater Risk Management Division, which is located at 100 Myrtle Avenue South, Clearwater, FL 33758. (Telephone 727-562-4652) You may receive medical care for an injury sustained while performing volunteer duties for the City, but only from an authorized medical provider. Risk Management Division personnel will direct you to an authorized medical provider. Tell the provider that you are seeking treatment under the Florida Worker's Compensation Act.

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# Sign up online!

Visit [www.myclearwater.com/parksvolunteers](http://www.myclearwater.com/parksvolunteers)

