

PARK DISTRICT OF OTTAWA COUNTY

Volunteer Code of Conduct

I. INTRODUCTION

The Park District of Ottawa County was established in 1992. The District remained inactive until 2018 when the Board of Park Commissioners began to meet regularly. The Board developed a mission to connect, enhance and protect the natural, scenic, environmental and cultural resources of Ottawa County for the enjoyment of residents and visitors. The Park District is now actively working toward its mission.

One of our jobs is to source quality volunteers, matched with the best opportunities. We also want to provide you with great service throughout your journey with us. We want you to know that we are on the end of the phone, or e-mail if you ever need our help!

PLEASE REMEMBER: While the Park District wants to provide a rewarding, enjoyable experience to our volunteers, we have established the following guidelines to ensure your safety and preserve the integrity of Park District.

II. OUR COMMITMENT TO VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are the heart of our organization.

The general public rarely see the event organizers or people behind the scenes - you, the volunteers, are the public face of our organization and of our events. You will oftentimes be the first person a visitor will come into contact with. You will make it happen, smooth the way, inform, help and guide people you come in to contact with. You are central to the Park District of Ottawa County team and we look forward to working with you to make the Park District of Ottawa County the best in the region.

III. WHAT IS THE CODE OF CONDUCT?

The Code of Conduct is a summary of the policies which apply to being a volunteer. This policy sets out the standards of behavior that the Park District expects from you and identifies your rights and responsibilities as a volunteer.

Compliance with the Code of Conduct is one condition of your involvement with us and should be regarded as a minimum standard which you should to work toward. If you are unsure whether a decision you are about to make conflicts with the Code of Conduct, ask your supervisor or the Director. By working within the guidelines of the Code of Conduct you will be contributing to the success of the District.

If you would like to ask us any questions about the content of this Code of Conduct, please contact the Director by phone (419-707-4051) or e-mail (jwilson@ottawacountyparksoh.org).

IV. STANDARDS

It is important that quality is at the heart of everything we do. All of our customers are entitled to a high level of service. As a volunteer, you have a responsibility to provide that high quality for all customers. It is important that we demonstrate a positive attitude and promote exceptional service.

The following standards will apply at all times:

- Clear instructions regarding your volunteer role (including: attendance, time & location of service time, uniforms, travel and any other requirements);
- Expectation that volunteers should be flexible and support events/activities where and as they can;
- Training in your role;
- A healthy, safe, and inclusive environment;
- Effective, appropriate supervision when and as needed.

V. GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. **Accountability**

It is important that you attend any day or shift you have been scheduled for. If you cannot do so, you must directly inform the Park District supervisor or Director as soon as possible. This is to ensure we make alternative arrangements to fill your role. Failure to contact us may place additional pressure on existing volunteers and damage the reputation of the Park District of Ottawa County.

2. **Additional Duties**

Due to the nature of some volunteer roles, you may at times be asked to perform additional duties other than those to which you were originally assigned. Your cooperation and flexibility will help the team to deliver their services / events as effectively and efficiently as possible. If, at ANY time, you feel unable to perform extra duties, please let your supervisor know.

3. **Confidential Information**

As a volunteer, you have an obligation to protect confidential or personal information in relation to the District, other volunteers and partner organizations. If you have access to confidential information (including addresses or telephone numbers of colleagues/clients), you should never discuss or disclose such information to anyone other than those intended/authorized to receive it, both during and after your involvement with the District and/or event.

4. **Contact with the Media**

All requests from members of the media for comments/information should be politely directed to the Director or a paid member of staff. This will ensure the accuracy of all information given to the media and help to maintain good relationships. Similarly, you should not give any interviews, appear in any promotions, advertisements or endorsements, or give any assistance to the media in relation to any story concerning the affairs of the District or any event, without the prior consent of the Director. Ask your supervisor if you need more information or if there is anything you are not sure about. You should also exercise discretion when commenting in your private capacity about the event where your comment may be understood to be an official comment of the organization.

5. **Criminal/Illegal activity**

Any volunteer found to be engaging in criminal or illegal activity will be excused from service with the District.

6. **Dangerous Weapons/ Firearms**

Possession/carrying firearms or dangerous weapons is strictly prohibited while in the service of the District regardless of licensing.

7. **Equal Opportunities**

The Park District of Ottawa County is committed to ensuring within the framework of the law that our workplace is free from unlawful or unfair discrimination related to any and all federally protected classes. We aim to ensure that our volunteers achieve their full potential and that all decisions are made without regard to discriminatory criteria.

8. **Facilities and Property**

Park District of Ottawa County and partner organizations may have significant constraints on resources with a high level of public accountability. We ask you to be good stewards of these resources and protect our assets. This covers all consumables and equipment including, but not limited to items such as: stationery, communication devices, computers, office equipment and other equipment. Property (including consumables) is not to be removed from the premises and/or used for private purposes without prior approval from your supervisor or the Director. You are not authorized to use District's equipment for private purposes (such as faxes, copiers/scanners, computers, phones or any other portable device).

9. **First Aid**

If a medical emergency should arise, unless you are trained in first aid, your first priority should be to get assistance from someone who is trained. Even if you are trained, ensure that professional medical help has been contacted prior to providing aid. If there is immediate danger, get yourself and those near you away from the area as quickly as possible.

10. Fraud and Corruption

Fraudulent and corrupt activities are in fundamental opposition to the spirit of the District. If you suspect fraudulent or corrupt behavior, report it immediately to your supervisor or the Director. We will treat reports of corruption/fraudulent behavior as confidential, where possible, and will seek to protect individuals making such reports from retaliation. All reports will be investigated promptly and fairly. Anyone found to be engaging in such conduct will be removed from service and referred to the police (if appropriate).

11. Gifts and Hospitality

It is a violation of ethics laws related to public employees and volunteers to accept gifts, except as determined to be nominal/*de-minimus*. You should report any gifts to your supervisor. Gifts, even of nominal value, should never be accepted if it could be seen as bribery. If you ever have any doubt, you should speak to your supervisor or the Director.

12. Gratuities/Tipping

Similar to accepting gifts, accepting or asking for tips or gratuities is strictly prohibited.

13. Health and Safety

The Park District of Ottawa County is committed to providing you with a safe working environment. You are required to exercise reasonable care in the course of your role to ensure the Health and Safety of yourself and others.

Please be aware and follow all safety guidance. The following safety responsibilities apply to everyone:

1. Pay close attention and familiarize yourself with the facilities where you are volunteering and note the different exits and access points;
2. Co-operate fully with event staff at all times;
3. Understand any emergency plans for the venue (e.g. fire evacuations);
4. Do not use any equipment or machinery which you have not been trained to use;
5. Take care when lifting and carrying (e.g. don't lift very heavy boxes);
6. Report any potential hazards to a supervisor or member of venue staff;
7. In the event of fire/hazard or any other risk, remove yourself and warn others of imminent danger
8. If you feel an activity is unsafe or you feel unwell, report this to your supervisor.
9. Contribute to a safe and healthy workplace - don't leave things lying around, keep work areas clear, neat and tidy.

14. Illegal Drugs and Alcohol

We prohibit the sale, distribution, use or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or any other substances that may affect your performance while in service to the District. Consumption of alcohol, illegal drugs or other performance-impairing substances prior to and/or during a work shift, or while in Park District uniform, is prohibited. You must ensure that your actions do not bring into question the integrity of yourself, the Park District or any partner organization. If you take medication which makes you drowsy, please inform your supervisor to ensure you are not given a role which would place you in danger.

15. Personal Cell Phones

If you need to use your mobile phone during your shift, please do so out of sight of the public.

16. Performance Issues

If a performance issue is identified, your supervisor will discuss with you the following: what the issue is, what the expectation is and how to resolve the issue. If the issue is not resolved promptly or to the degree necessary, you may be reassigned to a different duty/activity or your service with the District may be discontinued without advance notice.

17. Personal Grooming

You are required to be neatly groomed, presentable and to maintain a high level of personal hygiene at all times when in service to the District. If uniforms are provided and required, you will be expected to be in uniform, which will be neat, clean and presentable.

18. Personal Property

You should note that there might be no supervised storage space at the venue where you are volunteering. You are advised, therefore, not to bring valuables to work. The Park District of Ottawa County or the venue will not assume responsibility for loss, theft, or damage.

19. Professional Behavior

All volunteers have a responsibility to behave professionally at all times. While in uniform, you are a representative of the organization and your behaviour must reflect that. In consideration of that, we ask that you present yourself in a professional manner at all times.

While in uniform or acting in service to the District, you must not:

- smoke or chew tobacco, including any tobacco products, vapor products, or simulated smoking products;
- consume illegal substances;
- consume alcohol (unless given express permission by the Director as part of a social function);
- swear or use offensive language, including offensive/inappropriate jokes.

20. Security

Security measures may be in place at the venue and you will be required to adhere to security procedures while in service to the District. Any such security measures will be shared with you prior to your shift.

21. Solicitation While In Service

You must not engage in any personal business or other interests while volunteering. This includes solicitation of any products, services or organizations outside the scope of the District.

22. Training

Training is an important part of your volunteering experience and provides valuable information to help you in your role. You are required to attend all relevant training sessions provided to you.

23. Uniforms

Where issued, your uniform should be worn and maintained with pride and in accordance with the guidelines below:

- If you are provided with an official uniform, it must be worn when you are volunteering and you are expected to look neat and tidy while wearing it. It is your responsibility to clean and care for your uniform items.
- You are required to provide your own footwear. Footwear should be clean, comfortable and appropriate for the event. In some cases, for safety reasons, open toe shoes may not be permitted.
- In some limited circumstances, Personal Protective Equipment may be required and will be provided for (i.e. safety boots, Hi Visibility jackets, safety glasses). Personal comfort or various weather conditions may require you to wear additional layers of clothing. Additional layers of clothing should be worn under the official uniform. It is permissible to wear a coat over uniform when outdoors during inclement weather.
- Uniform items should only be worn when you are volunteering. Please exercise good judgement and careful consideration any time you are wearing your uniform outside of your service to the District.

Additional garments and accessories that don't detract from the uniform or interfere with your ability to perform your volunteer service may be worn for comfort or necessity (jackets, sweatshirts, jewelry, hats, etc.).

PLEASE REMEMBER:

The Park District of Ottawa County and its partner organizations want to provide a professional service to its volunteers but we also want you to have fun and enjoy your volunteering experience. We would like you to know that the time you give up for our mission is very much appreciated.

VI. Acknowledgement of Receipt and Understanding of Volunteer Code of Conduct

“By my signature below, I hereby acknowledge and affirm receipt of the Park District of Ottawa County Volunteer Code of Conduct.

I further affirm having read and understood the Code, while having ample opportunity to ask questions and seek clarification.

I understand that my failure to comply with the guidance set forth in this Code of Conduct will result in my dismissal from service to the Park District of Ottawa County.

Upon my dismissal, I understand I am expected to return any and all property belonging to the District, or I shall bear the financial obligation for any unreturned property, including uniforms, keys, etc.”

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date Signed: _____