



# WELCOME MANUAL



*Updated May 24, 2021*





## Contents

4	From the Executive Director
5	Purpose of this Manual
6	Organizational Information
8	Helpful Information about Palatine Park District
8	FAQs
10	Volunteer Information
15	Volunteer Agreement



## From the Executive Director

### Welcome and thank you for volunteering with Palatine Park District!

We appreciate the time, talents and energy you freely give to our mission and cause. Our volunteers are vital to the success of many of our programs, services and events and are an instrumental part of our human resources and team. Without your help, we could not effectively meet the needs of our community.

Some individuals are able to give many hours each year while others may join us for a few hours to help with a specific need. Regardless, each contribution of time is important and appreciated.

We hope that you enjoy your volunteer experience. You are doing something positive and making a difference in your community. To assist you in getting the most out of your experience as a Palatine Park District Volunteer we have created this manual. It will provide important information for you about the Park District, the volunteer program, contact information and helpful hints aimed at making your volunteer experience one filled with enjoyment, learning and fellowship.

Thank you again for your volunteerism and giving back to your community.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Clark', with a stylized, cursive script.

Michael Clark  
Executive Director  
Palatine Park District



## Purpose of this Manual

This manual has been produced to provide individuals with the information needed to become a Palatine Park District volunteer. This book includes information about the District's history, philosophy, and practices, as well as the benefits provided to the valued volunteers. The District depends on each and every one of its volunteers.

The Volunteer Manual is not intended to answer every question regarding the Palatine Park District Volunteer Program. Its purpose is to provide essential information regarding the program and practices of the District. Volunteers that have questions or concerns after reviewing the manual, or at any time while volunteering with the district, are encouraged to contact the Volunteer Coordinator.

District staff members appreciate the many people who give their time and talents through volunteering to provide programs and special events for the community. It is hoped that volunteers will enjoy the time spent working with the District and their fellow volunteers. There are many opportunities to explore, each of which will provide volunteers with a positive and rewarding experience.

*This manual supersedes all previously issued manuals. Palatine Park District reserves the right to modify this manual at any time, without prior notice.*



## Organizational Information

Palatine Park District is a separate municipal governing agency established in 1945. It was formed for the purpose of providing parks, facilities, and recreation programs for the community. The Park District owns or manages more than 700 acres of park land, three recreation centers, preschools, pools, a maintenance facility, golf course, and riding stable. Residents enjoy a wide variety of outdoor activities as well as hundreds of recreational programs offered throughout the year. The Board of Park Commissioners and the staff are responsible for the maintenance, operation, and administration of the parks and facilities within its jurisdiction.

### Mission Statement - What We Do

Our mission is to provide a variety of safe, enjoyable, and affordable parks, programs, and recreational facilities and activities that will enhance the quality of life by promoting good health and well-being for all residents and visitors while being fiscally responsible stewards of community assets and tax dollars.

### Values - How We Operate

We are committed to moving the District's Mission forward through actions guided by the following Values:

Integrity	Exhibiting trust and transparency in all our actions, or in other words, what you do when you think no one is watching.
Communication	Creating and setting clear expectations through timely and open conversation while effectively respecting the differences of others.
Accountability	Taking action and ownership for all work responsibilities, obligations to those we serve and ensuring timely and effective follow through in all we do.
Collaboration	Seeking outreach and partnerships within the community and achieving better results by working together in a respectful and inclusive way. Being leaders in community development and improvement.
Leadership	Encouraging opportunities and professional growth for employees within a positive culture and trustful environment while practicing open-mindedness and fairness to all involved. Being leaders in our community by promoting positive social influences through role modeling.

### Park District Board of Commissioners

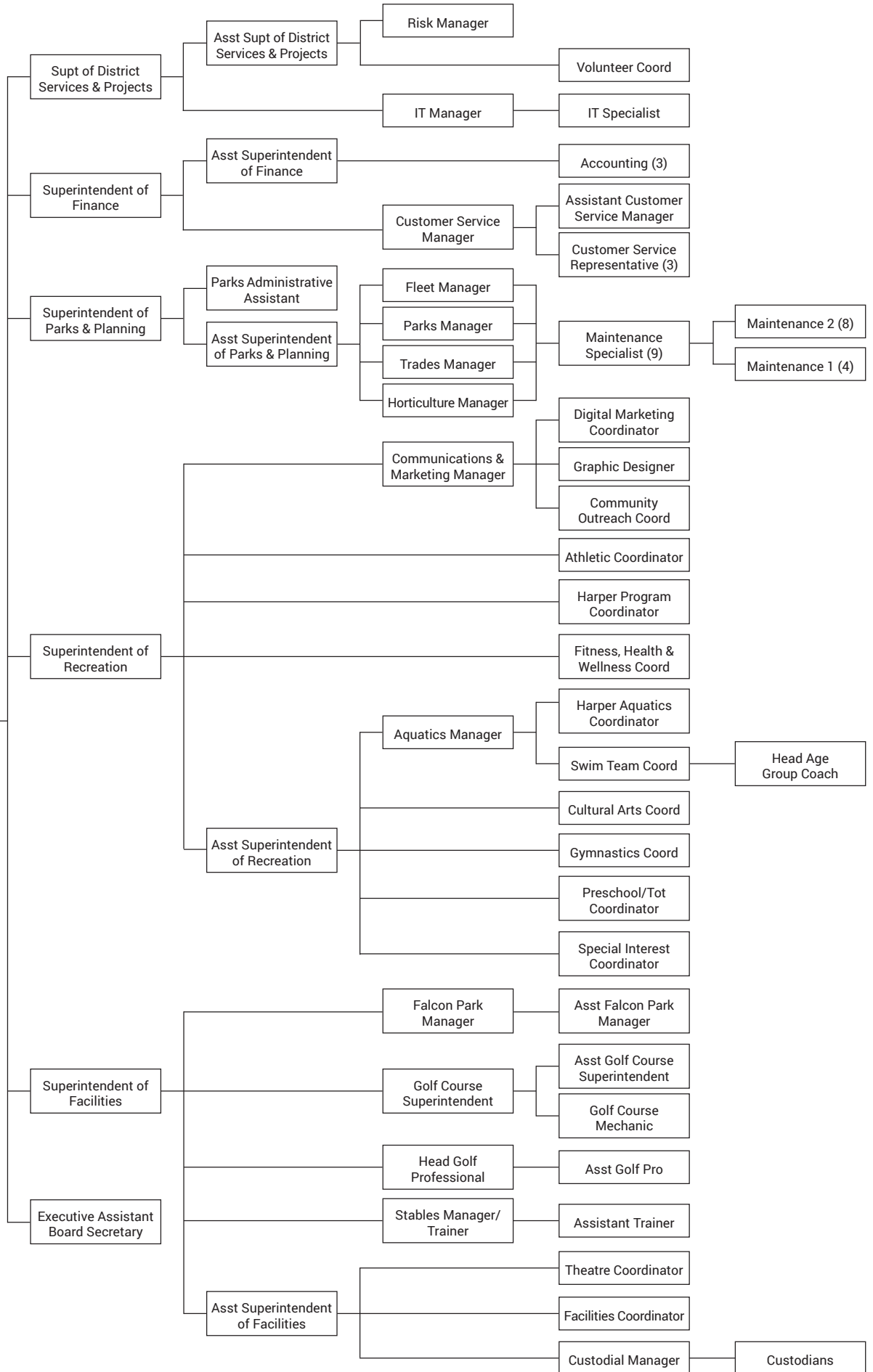
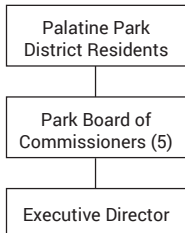
The Park District is governed by five commissioners who are each elected to serve a six year term. The Board generally conducts public meetings at 7:00 p.m. on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month. Their duties include reviewing and approving the district's finances, formulating and adopting policies for overall management, operations, and planning for improvements of the parks, recreation facilities and activities within the Park District. The Park Board also solicits community input, promotes and interprets programs to other public and government officials, and fulfills all statutory requirements as prescribed by law.

### Organizational Chart

As shown on the following page, Palatine Park District is comprised of five departments: District Services and Projects, Facilities, Finance, Parks, and Recreation, each with a department head who is tasked with overall management and a staff that tends to the operational needs of the District. Each department has an area of responsibility and all the departments work together to provide quality facilities and programs.



# Palatine Park District Organizational Chart



# Helpful Information about Palatine Park District

## Contact Information

**District Main Phone:** 847.991.0333

**Volunteer Website:** [volunteer.palatineparks.org](http://volunteer.palatineparks.org)

**Recruitment & Volunteer Coordinator Office:** 847.496.6212

## Parking and Building Access

When parking in a Park District lot, volunteers and employees should use spaces farther from the main entrance, to allow patrons closer access. Offsite parking is occasionally necessary for large events. When needed, volunteers will be given permits for special access parking. Please follow special parking directions if given by the Recruitment & Volunteer Coordinator.

## Holidays and Office Hours

Please refer to our website at [palatineparks.org](http://palatineparks.org) for a list of holiday closures and office hours.

## FAQs

### How do interested individuals sign up for an opportunity?

Most volunteer opportunities are found on our volunteer website at [volunteer.palatineparks.org](http://volunteer.palatineparks.org).

### How do volunteers find out if an event has been canceled?

Volunteers will be contacted by the event coordinator or Recruitment & Volunteer Coordinator as soon as event updates are determined. Volunteers will also be provided with event day contact information prior to event day.

### How do volunteers cancel a commitment?

Prior to event day and if [signup.com](http://signup.com) was used to select a role, volunteers should remove their name from that role on [signup.com](http://signup.com) ASAP to allow another volunteer time to fill the role. To cancel on event day, call the provided event day contact. If the role is a regularly scheduled one, call the provided contact person to inform them of the absence.

### Who do volunteers contact in an emergency?

In the event of an emergency, volunteers should call 911 then contact the event's volunteer supervisor.

### Can volunteers bring a friend/child to volunteer with them?

Generally, yes, provided that they have filled out the application and waiver and have passed the required background check (ages 18 and older). In addition, each available role must be filled with a separate individual—volunteers cannot use their own name to sign up for extra spots for additional people. Volunteers are encouraged to invite friends and family to participate in the Palatine Park District Volunteer Program. All volunteers must complete their own volunteer application form, volunteer waiver, and volunteer onboarding process.





# Volunteer Program

## Vision for Volunteer Involvement

Palatine Park District volunteers play a vital role in carrying out the District's Mission of providing safe, enjoyable, and affordable parks, programs, and recreational facilities and activities for the community. Volunteers enhance the District's efforts to provide quality programs and events, increase fiscal responsibility, and provide a positive impact to the community!

## What Volunteers Can Expect from Palatine Park District

Volunteers who assist the District can expect to:

- Work in a healthy and safe environment and to be treated with respect
- Be given the on-boarding, orientation, and training necessary to fulfill each role
- Be given a copy of the volunteer manual and any procedures that affect each role
- Have a role description and agreed upon hours of contribution

## What Palatine Park District Expects from Volunteers

Throughout their time of service, volunteers should:

- Be reliable
- Be accountable for all actions
- Be committed to the organization
- Let the supervisor know as soon as possible if they are unable to keep their commitment
- Respect confidentiality of participants and staff
- Not discuss situations or individuals
- Carry out the specified role according to the position description
- Ask for support when needed
- Behave appropriately at all times and be courteous to the public, staff, and other volunteers
- Value and support other team members
- Ensure the safety of themselves and others by following policies and procedures
- Sign the volunteer manual Agreement/Acknowledgement Form
- Discuss any issues they may have regarding the Park District with their supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator
- Not denigrate the Park District to the public, staff, or other volunteers
- Give notice before leaving the Park District Volunteer Program



# Volunteer Information

## Eligibility Requirements

Palatine Park District welcomes all volunteers. Each person must submit a completed volunteer application, a signed waiver and, when required, successfully pass a background screening. Volunteers may choose the opportunities that are of interest to them. Some roles have age restrictions or other requirements, so volunteers should carefully read the details provided for each role on [signup.com](http://signup.com) when making a commitment. Volunteers with questions or concerns regarding a volunteer opportunity or the roles available should contact the Volunteer Coordinator.

## Background Screenings

In accordance with the law, it is the policy of Palatine Park District that all volunteers 18 and older, and those working with youth under the age of 18, must successfully pass a background screening prior to beginning their first volunteer commitment and every 3 years thereafter. Background checks are conducted by an independent service contracted by the District and all information provided during the screening process is between the applicant and the service provider. The District receives a report indicating the pass/fail results. Palatine Park District's Criminal Background Check policy is available on the volunteer web page.

## Photo Releases

When signing the volunteer application, volunteers are giving their consent for Palatine Park District to use any photos or video coverage of themselves, and/or minor child/ward in future publications and promotional materials. Photos and videos remain the property of Palatine Park District.

## Orientation and Training

Palatine Park District volunteers are given a volunteer manual during their onboarding process. This manual contains guidelines for the volunteer program and the policies that govern it. At each event or program, volunteers will receive role-specific training prior to beginning service.

## Volunteer Conduct

Every Palatine Park District volunteer is expected to work toward meeting the goal of providing services in a friendly, efficient, and professional manner. Volunteers are urged to make suggestions to their Supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator that will benefit the District and its patrons by saving time, reducing waste, promoting safety, increasing efficiency, or improving the experience for participants.

District volunteers are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of professional integrity, honesty, and responsibility. Volunteers represent the District to patrons and while volunteering should treat everyone with respect and courtesy.

Palatine Park District has many policies that govern employment with the District, its operations, and the way business is conducted, but these policies may not apply to those in a volunteer role. The common sense rules and guidelines which are provided here are designed to promote orderly, efficient, and safe operations and have been developed from years of experience by District staff. Volunteers are expected to read the rules and conduct themselves accordingly.



## Media Inquiries

Members of the media are occasionally present at Palatine Park District programs. As private citizens, volunteers may freely address any questions that might be asked. However, as a District Volunteer, all media inquiries should be directed to staff or the event coordinator.

## Attendance

Volunteer attendance is important to the success of each program and event. When volunteers sign up for a volunteer commitment, Palatine Park District is relying on them to fill that role. If volunteers know prior to the event that they cannot meet their commitment, they should remove themselves from [signup.com](https://signup.com) so another volunteer can fill the role. On event day, should an emergency occur, volunteers who are unable to meet their commitment should notify their supervisor as soon as possible.

An absence is considered a no show/no call if notification is not received by midnight the day prior. Two no show/no calls within a one year period results in the loss of specific role sign up privileges. Volunteers will still be able to volunteer at Palatine Park District environmental stewardship projects and other mass volunteer events, however, they will no longer be allowed to reserve specific roles for volunteer opportunities through the [signup.com](https://signup.com) software program.

## Dress Code

Unless provided with other directions from the supervisor, volunteers should wear their complimentary Palatine Park District volunteer t-shirt with pants/shorts of an appropriate length. Clothes need to be clean and in good repair (no holes). To protect feet, closed toe shoes are preferred. Volunteers should dress for the weather, including any outerwear that may be needed.

## What to Bring

- A positive helpful attitude
- Water bottle
- Appropriate outerwear, sunscreen, or umbrella if needed for outdoor events
- Volunteer log sheet (if required)

## Cell Phones

Volunteers are expected to give their complete attention to their duties. For this reason cell phone use while on duty is not permitted. Cell phones may only be used in the event of an emergency to inform Park District staff or first responders of the emergency situation. Volunteers who need to make or receive a personal call or text message while on duty should inform their supervisor.



## Confidentiality

Out of respect for the privacy and rights of all individuals associated with the Park District, personal observations and opinions should be kept in confidence. Volunteers are expected to keep any information that they are formally or informally exposed to during their time as a volunteer in confidence. Volunteers who have questions or concerns regarding any information they have seen or heard should discuss it with their supervisor or the Recruitment & Volunteer Coordinator. This confidentiality helps maintain a safe and trusted environment for employees, volunteers and patrons of Palatine Park District.

## Risk Management

The Risk Management Office provides emergency response procedures to ensure a safe environment for event/program participants, staff members, and volunteers. If at any time an unsafe condition is observed, the volunteer should immediately bring the situation to the attention of the supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator. They will make any necessary corrections and notify the appropriate staff.

## Safety in the Workplace

It is Palatine Park District's intention to provide a safe environment for its volunteers, employees, and patrons. Safety is everyone's responsibility and volunteers are expected to observe safety rules and regulations, exercise caution, and perform their assigned duties in a manner that will avoid injury or create hazardous conditions. Safety and loss prevention should be a matter of concern equal in importance with all other operational considerations and volunteers are expected to be alert for safety issues or hazards. Any and all unsafe conditions or equipment must be reported immediately upon discovery so corrective actions can be taken. Carelessness, inattention, neglect, and disregard for safety rules can cause accidents. Volunteer duties should be performed in a safe manner. For more information on safety guidelines, volunteers can refer to Personnel Policy 3.08.0, Safety in the Workplace.

## Emergency Procedures

Pre-event inspections are completed to identify and reduce hazards and concerns. Response procedures are written as an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) and are specific to each event. For every event, employees are assigned specific emergency response roles. They are specifically named and given a description of the role responsibilities. A copy of the event EAP will be available in several locations at every event and will always be available at volunteer check in, the designated first aid booth, and with the event coordinator.

The EAP will contain pertinent information such as:

- Location of required emergency equipment
- Established contingency gathering locations
- Whether first responders will be on site
- Location of mass notification systems
- Means of communication among event staff and volunteers

All District facilities are equipped with Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs). AEDs are also present at outdoor events and generally located at the first aid stations. All full-time Park District employees are certified in CPR and AED use.



## Severe Weather Policy

Palatine Park District offers hundreds of programs, activities, services, and hosted events (“programming”) throughout the year. The District is committed to the safety and well-being of all participants, volunteers, and staff associated with this effort. Much of the District’s programming is held outdoors and is subject to weather conditions. The District may use warning systems and information provided by the National Weather Service when making decisions regarding inclement weather. Under such circumstances the District will take all reasonable precautions to determine necessary or appropriate actions including, but not limited to: (1) closure of the District, or any District owned or controlled indoor or outdoor facility; (2) cancellation, suspension, or delay of programming; or, (3) if practical, programming relocation or modification (Administrative Policy 2.12.25 Inclement Weather).

## Alcohol and Drug Abuse Policy

Palatine Park District provides a safe, drug free work environment. It is expected that all personnel (employees and volunteers) report to work and remain in a condition suitable to perform their duties at the highest level of efficiency. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of drugs or alcohol by volunteers is prohibited on District property or when volunteering for the District (Administrative Policy 2.16.11 Drug Free Workplace).

## Violence Free Work Environment

Palatine Park District promotes a safe work environment for all volunteers and does not tolerate any type of violent behavior committed by or against volunteers. Threatening or violent behavior committed by anyone against volunteers, employees, or program participants will not be tolerated. Such behavior may include but is not limited to:

- Physical injury to another person
- Threats
- Behavior that creates a reasonable fear of injury
- Intentionally causing damage to District property or property of another person
- Possession of weapons (i.e.: guns, knives, clubs, explosive devices, etc.) on District property or at District sponsored activities (Personnel Policy 3.09.7.1 Weapons Policy)
- Committing acts motivated by, or related to, sexual harassment or domestic violence

Statements or gestures which in any way suggest that an individual may engage in violent conduct will be taken seriously by the District and responded to appropriately. Volunteers have a responsibility to immediately report a potentially dangerous situation or unauthorized individual(s) on Palatine Park District premises to their supervisor.

Incidents involving violent behavior by a volunteer may warrant removal of the individual until further evaluation determines their suitability for returning. A volunteer suspected of violent behavior may be placed on leave during an investigation until a course of action is determined.



## Record and Time Keeping

Palatine Park District uses signup.com to maintain volunteer records. From time to time volunteers are completing service hours required by other organizations. Volunteers who have a service log from an outside organization that requires a signature should give the form to the supervisor at the conclusion of each assignment. District staff will only sign service logs for hours completed with the Palatine Park District that have been supervised by staff.

## Leaving the Organization

Volunteers may resign from the District at any time and are encouraged to provide the Recruitment & Volunteer Coordinator two weeks' notice.





## Volunteer Agreement

I, \_\_\_\_\_, certify that I have received a copy of the Palatine Park District Volunteer Manual and have reviewed its policies and procedures. I understand my responsibilities and will discuss any questions or concerns I may have with the Volunteer Coordinator. By signing this Agreement I understand that I am agreeing to abide by the contents of the Volunteer Manual, I understand the items listed here, and that this document will become a part of my volunteer file.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> General information about Palatine Park District       | <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer Conduct        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Park District Organizational Chart and Staff Structure | • Attendance                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Palatine Park District Mission and Values              | • Dress Code                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vision for Volunteer Involvement                       | • What to Bring                                   |
| • What Volunteers Can Expect from Palatine Park District                        | • Cell Phone Use                                  |
| • What Palatine Park District Expects from Volunteers                           | • Confidentiality                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eligibility  | <input type="checkbox"/> Risk Management          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer Onboarding                                   | • Safety  |
| • Application   | • Emergency Procedures                            |
| • Waiver  | • Severe Weather                                  |
| • Background Screening (if needed)  | • Alcohol and Drug Abuse Policy                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Orientation and Training                               | • Violence Free Work Environment                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Photo Release and Media Inquiries                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Record and Time Keeping  |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Leaving the Organization |

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Volunteer Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

If the volunteer is under the age of 18, a parent or legal guardian must also sign below granting their authorization for the minor to perform volunteer services.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Parent/Guardian Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

Prior to your service with Palatine Park District you must read the Volunteer Manual, sign this Agreement, and submit this Agreement to:

Palatine Park District, Attn: Volunteer Program, 250 E. Wood Street, Palatine, IL 60067

