



VOLUNTEER MANUAL

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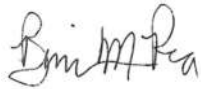
From the Executive Director

Welcome to the Palatine Park District's Volunteer Program!

We know that there are many volunteer opportunities throughout the community and we are honored that you have chosen to spend your time with us!

To ensure that your time as a volunteer is fulfilling and rewarding, this Volunteer Manual is being provided to help guide you. Please take some time to review the content and follow-up with our Volunteer Coordinator if you have any questions.

Thank you again for joining our team. We hope you find your volunteer experience meaningful and memorable!



Benjamin M. Rea
Executive Director



Purpose of this Manual

This Volunteer Manual provides individuals with the information and resources needed to serve as volunteers with the Palatine Park District, including an overview of the District's history, mission, values, volunteer program, and operating practices. The District relies on the dedication, enthusiasm, and support of its volunteers, whose contributions are essential to the success of community programs, events, and services.

While this manual serves as a helpful guide to volunteer policies, procedures, and opportunities, volunteers are encouraged to contact the Volunteer Coordinator with any questions or concerns.

The Palatine Park District sincerely appreciates the time, skills, and talents of its volunteers and hopes their experience is both rewarding and enjoyable, offering meaningful connections and opportunities to contribute in ways that match their interests and abilities.

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 for the purpose of providing parks, facilities, and recreation programs for the community. The Park District is responsible for the maintenance, operation, and administration of parks and facilities under its jurisdiction.

In nearly eighty years of service, it has grown in programs, facilities, and recreation importance in the lives of District residents. The current population served is just over 83,000 and includes residents in multiple communities within its borders.

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 ensure 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.

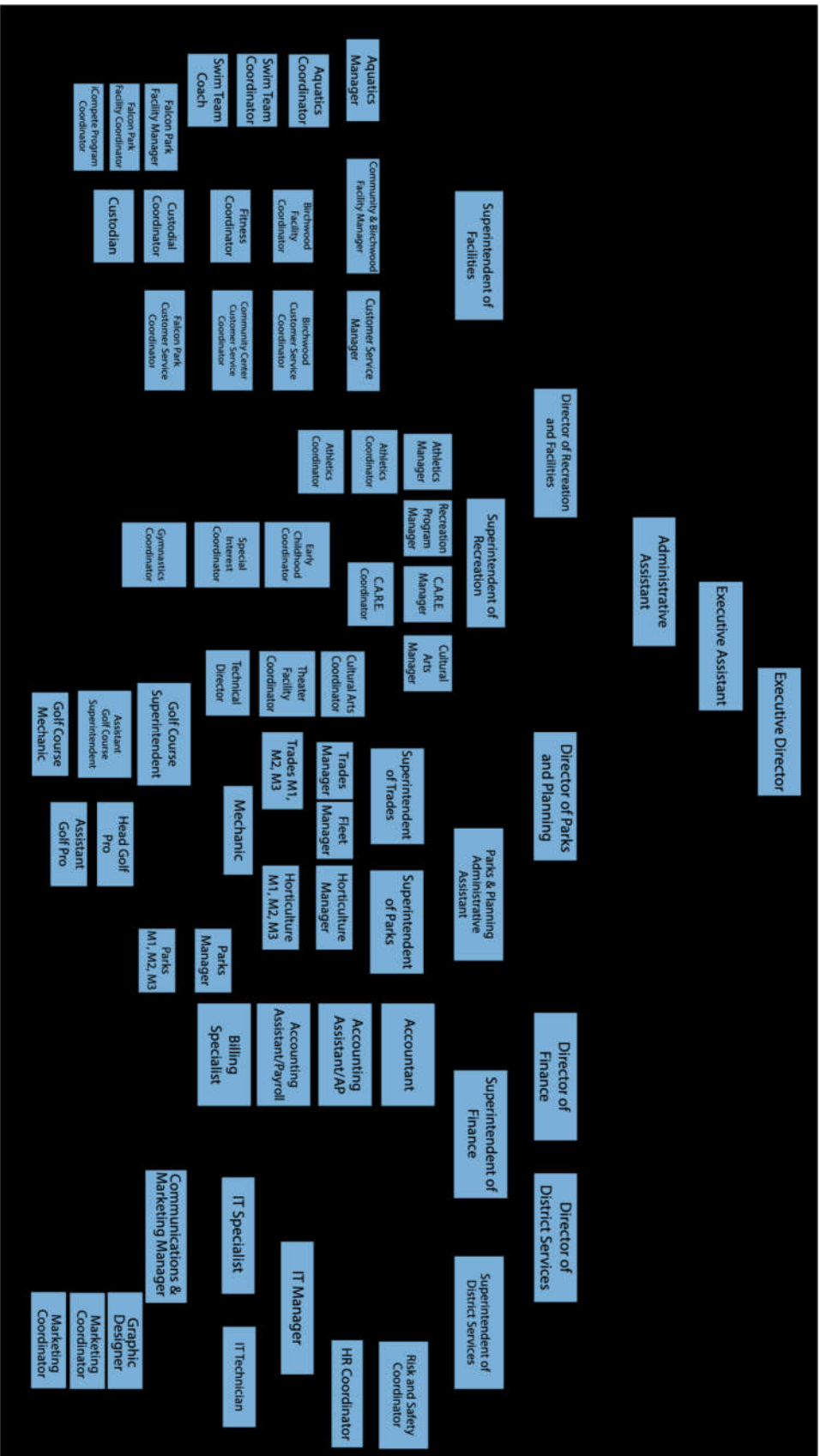
Park District Board of Commissioners

The Park District is governed by a Board of five Park Commissioners, each elected to a six-year term. The Board of Commissioners shall determine by policy the effective management and operations of the District and employ the professional services of an Executive Director to implement and report to the Board the effectiveness of these efforts and policies in the delivery of park and recreation services to the residents of the District.

Organizational Chart

The Palatine Park District consists of five departments - District Services, Finance, Parks, Recreation & Facilities, and Administration - each led by a department head responsible for overall management and supported by staff who oversee daily operations. While each department has specific responsibilities, all work together to provide quality facilities, programs, and services to the community.





Helpful Information about Palatine Park District

Contact Information

District Main Phone: 847-991-0333

Volunteer Website: <https://palatineparks.galaxydigital.com/>

Volunteer Coordinator Office: 847-359-4801

Parking and Building Access

When parking at a Park District facility, volunteers and employees are encouraged to use parking spaces located farther from the main entrance whenever possible. This helps ensure convenient access for patrons and visitors. For certain large events, offsite parking may be required. In these situations, volunteers will be provided with parking permits or instructions for designated parking areas. Please follow all parking directions and guidelines provided by the Volunteer Coordinator.

Holiday and Office Hours

Please refer to our website at 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 <https://palatineparks.galaxydigital.com/>

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

Volunteers will be notified by the Volunteer Coordinator or Event Supervisor as soon as any event updates or changes are confirmed. Prior to the event, volunteers will also receive event-day contact information.

How do volunteers cancel a commitment?

If a volunteer is unable to fulfill a scheduled commitment, they should remove their name from the volunteer opportunity as soon as possible to allow another volunteer the opportunity to fill the role. If a cancellation occurs the day before or on the day of the event, the volunteer should contact the designated event-day contact person directly. For regularly scheduled volunteer assignments, volunteers should notify their assigned supervisor or contact person as soon as they become aware of their absence.

Who do volunteers contact in an emergency?

In the event of an emergency, volunteers should call 911 to request emergency assistance. After contacting emergency services, volunteers should notify the event's Volunteer Supervisor as soon as it is safe to do so.

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

Generally, yes, if each individual has completed the required volunteer application, signed the volunteer waiver, and successfully passed the background check (for volunteers ages 13 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

Volunteers are an essential part of the Palatine Park District's success and play a vital role in advancing the District's mission to provide safe, enjoyable, and affordable parks, programs, recreational facilities, and activities for the community. Through their dedication and service, volunteers help enhance the quality of District programs and events. Their contributions help create positive experiences for residents and strengthen the connection between the Park District and the people it serves.

What Volunteers Can Expect from Palatine Park District

Volunteers who support the District can expect to:

- Work in a safe, healthy, and inclusive environment where they are treated with dignity and respect.
- Receive the onboarding, orientation, and training necessary to successfully perform their volunteer responsibilities.
- Be provided with a copy of the Volunteer Manual and any policies, procedures, or guidelines relevant to their assigned role
- Have a clear understanding of their volunteer position, including role expectations, responsibilities, and agreed-upon service hours.

What Palatine Park District Expects from Volunteers

Throughout their service with the District, volunteers are expected to:

- Be reliable, dependable, and adhere to their volunteer commitment(s).
- Conduct themselves professionally and courteously when interacting with the public, staff, and other volunteers.
- Represent the Park District in a positive and respectful manner; refrain from making disparaging remarks about the District to the public, staff, or other volunteers.
- Notify their Event Supervisor or Volunteer Coordinator as soon as possible if unable to fulfill a scheduled commitment.
- Seek guidance, clarification, or support when needed to successfully carry out their role.
- Respect the confidentiality and privacy of participants, staff, and fellow volunteers; Refrain from discussing confidential information, situations, or individuals encountered through their volunteer service.
- Promote the safety and well-being of themselves and others by following all applicable policies, procedures, and safety guidelines.
- Review and sign the Volunteer Agreement, Waiver and conduct a Background Check.
- Wear proper attire for their assigned activity and weather conditions.



Volunteer Information

Eligibility Requirements

Palatine Park District welcomes individuals of all backgrounds to volunteer. Each prospective volunteer is required to submit a completed volunteer application, a signed waiver, and may also be required to successfully complete a background screening, depending on the role. Volunteers can select opportunities that align with their interests. However, some positions may have age restrictions or additional requirements. Volunteers should carefully review the details of each opportunity before making a commitment. Individuals with questions about specific volunteer opportunities are encouraged to contact the Volunteer Coordinator for assistance.

Background Screenings

In accordance with applicable law, the Palatine Park District requires all volunteers age 13 and older, as well as those who work with youth under the age of 18, to successfully complete a background screening prior to beginning their first volunteer assignment and every three years thereafter.

Background screenings are conducted by an independent third-party provider contracted by the District. All information submitted during the screening process is confidential between the applicant and the service provider. The District only receives a pass/fail result. Palatine Park District's Criminal Background Check Policy is available on the volunteer webpage.

Orientation and Training

During the onboarding process, volunteers are provided with a Volunteer Manual that outlines the guidelines, expectations, and policies governing the volunteer program. In addition, volunteers will receive role-specific training prior to each event or program to ensure they are prepared to carry out their assigned responsibilities.

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 Volunteer Coordinator or Event Supervisor 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 uphold the highest standards of integrity, honesty, and responsibility. As representatives of the District, volunteers should treat all patrons, staff, and fellow volunteers with respect, professionalism, and courtesy at all times.

Statement of Admission

A Statement of Admission is what to say, or not to say when an accident or incident occurs. All volunteers are expected to always act and conduct themselves in the best interest of the agency. When an accident occurs, no matter how insignificant it may seem to be, it is of the utmost importance never to presume or admit guilt or fault of any kind. Volunteers should never speculate on the cause(s) of the accident or injury or discuss any facts of the accident. Volunteers should cooperate with investigating authorities and with any investigation conducted by or on behalf of the agency. All questions relating to an accident involving agency property and/or personnel should be promptly directed to a department head, or agency spokesperson.



Professional Communications

While volunteering as a representative of Palatine Park District we ask that you always speak of the organization, Full Time Staff, Part Time and Seasonal employees, other volunteers, patrons and families in a positive light. Defamation is the issuance of a false statement about another person or organization, which causes that person or organization to suffer harm. Slander involves making defamatory statements usually oral or spoken by a transitory (non-fixed) representation. Libel is the written equivalent of slander which includes print and online material. Volunteers found to be engaging in defamation or slander will be disciplined up to and including termination.

Attendance

Volunteer attendance is essential to the success of each program and event. When volunteers sign up for a commitment, the Palatine Park District relies on them to fulfill that role. If a volunteer knows in advance that they are unable to attend, they should cancel their registration as soon as possible so another volunteer may take their place.

If an emergency arises on the day of the event, volunteers who are unable to attend should notify the Volunteer Coordinator as soon as possible.

An absence will be considered a “no call/no show” if notice is not received by midnight the day prior to the scheduled commitment. Two no call/no show incidents within a one-year period will result in the loss of privileges to reserve specific volunteer roles. Volunteers will still be eligible to participate in large group volunteer events; however, they will no longer be able to reserve specific roles through the volunteer portal.

Dress Code

Unless otherwise directed by the Volunteer Coordinator, volunteers should wear their complimentary Palatine Park District volunteer T-shirt paired with pants or shorts of an appropriate length. Clothing should be clean, neat, and in good repair, with no holes or excessive wear.

Closed-toe shoes are strongly recommended to ensure foot safety. Volunteers should also dress appropriately for the weather and bring any necessary outerwear to remain comfortable during their service.

Cell Phones

Volunteers are expected to provide their full attention during their assignment. For this reason, personal cell phone use is not permitted during volunteer service. Cell phones may be used only in the event of an emergency to contact first responders or Park District staff. If a volunteer needs to make or receive a personal call or text message while on duty, they should first inform their Event Supervisor.

Photo Release

By signing the volunteer agreement, volunteers provide consent for the Palatine Park District to use photographs or video footage of themselves and/or any minor child/ward in future publications, promotional materials, and related communications. All photographs and video recordings remain the property of the Palatine Park District.



Confidentiality

All volunteers are expected to maintain professional standards related to confidentiality. Volunteers are not to discuss information or situations relating to participants or staff with anyone other than appropriate staff in order to problem-solve or make decisions. Furthermore, volunteers must not use the first and last names of participants or identifying details/features to discuss information or situations relating to participant or personnel issues in public places or areas where others may not hear discussions that do not have the right to know about such information. A violation of these responsibilities is cause for disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Risk Management

The Risk Management Office provides emergency response procedures designed to help maintain a safe environment for event and program participants, staff, and volunteers. If a volunteer observes an unsafe condition at any time, they should immediately report it to the Event Supervisor or Volunteer Coordinator. Appropriate corrective action will be taken, and the relevant staff will be notified as needed.

Safety in the Workplace

It is the Palatine Park District's intention to maintain a safe environment for volunteers, employees, and patrons. Safety is a shared responsibility, and volunteers are expected to follow all safety rules and regulations, use appropriate caution, and perform their duties in a manner that prevents injury and avoids hazardous conditions.

Safety and loss prevention are as important as all other operational considerations. Volunteers are expected to remain alert to potential hazards and report any unsafe conditions or equipment immediately so that corrective action can be taken.

Carelessness, inattention, neglect, or failure to follow safety procedures may result in accidents. All volunteer duties must be performed in a safe and responsible manner. For additional information, please refer to the District Safety Manual.

Emergency Protocols

Pre-event inspections are conducted to identify and minimize potential hazards or safety concerns. Response procedures are developed as an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) and are tailored to each specific event. For every event, employees are assigned designated emergency response roles and provided with clear descriptions of their responsibilities.

A copy of the event EAP is available at multiple locations during each event and will always be accessible at volunteer check-in, the designated first aid station, and with the Event Supervisor.

The EAP includes important information such as:

- The location of required emergency equipment
- Designated contingency or gathering areas
- Whether first responders will be on site
- The location of mass notification systems
- Methods of communication among staff and volunteers

All District facilities are equipped with Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs). AEDs are also available at outdoor events, typically located at first aid stations. In addition, many Park District employees are trained and 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 ensuring the safety and well-being of all participants, volunteers, and staff involved in these activities. Since a lot of the programming takes place outdoors, it is subject to changing weather conditions. The District may rely on warning systems and information from the National Weather Service when making decisions related to inclement weather.

In such circumstances, the District will take reasonable steps to determine appropriate actions, which may include: (1) closing any District-owned or controlled indoor or outdoor facility; (2) canceling, suspending, or delaying programming; or (3) when feasible, relocating or modifying programming.

Alcohol and Drug Abuse Policy

Palatine Park District is committed to maintaining a safe, drug-free environment. All personnel, including employees and volunteers, are expected to report for duty and remain in a condition that allows them to perform their responsibilities effectively and safely.

The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of drugs or alcohol by volunteers is strictly prohibited on District property or while serving in a volunteer capacity (Drug-Free Workplace).

Smoking

All volunteers are subject to the Park District Conduct Ordinance while on Park District property while on or off duty. The Park District’s Conduct Ordinance states:

- “Smoking” means the lighting of cigarettes, electronic cigarettes, cigars, cigarillos, hookahs, or pipes, the carrying of lighted cigarettes, electronic cigarettes, cigars, cigarillos, hookahs or pipes, or the intentional and direct inhalation of smoke from these objects. The term “electronic cigarettes” for the purposes of this Ordinance shall mean an electronic or battery-operated device that delivers vapors for inhalation and include every variation and type of such devices whether they are manufactured, distributed, marketed, or sold as an electronic cigarette, an electronic cigar, an electronic cigarillo, an electronic pipe, an electronic hookah or any other product name or descriptor.
- Smoking or any use of a tobacco product is prohibited within fifty (50) feet of all Park District building entrances, exits, windows that open, and ventilation intakes that serve Park District buildings, all Facilities, all wooded areas on District property, at playgrounds and ball fields while children are present, and all other locations where signs are posted prohibiting smoking.

Violence Free Work Environment

Palatine Park District is committed to maintaining a safe environment for all volunteers and does not tolerate any form of violent or threatening behavior by or against volunteers, employees, or program participants. Such behavior may include, but is not limited to:

- Physical harm to another individual
- Threats of violence
- Behavior that creates a reasonable fear of injury
- Intentional damage to District property or the property of others
- Possession of weapons (including guns, knives, clubs, explosive devices, etc.) on District property or at District-sponsored activities (Personnel Weapons Policy)
- Committing acts motivated by or related to sexual harassment or domestic violence

Any statements or gestures suggesting potential violence will be taken seriously and addressed appropriately. Volunteers must immediately report potentially dangerous situations or unauthorized individuals on District property to their Event Supervisor or Volunteer Coordinator. Incidents involving violent behavior may result in immediate removal from volunteer service pending review and a volunteer may be placed on leave during an investigation until an appropriate course of action is determined.



Harassment and Anti-Discrimination

The Palatine Park District is committed to a work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Everyone has the right to work in a professional atmosphere that prohibits discriminatory practices, including harassment. Every employee, officer, official, director, agent, volunteer, and vendor of the Park District, as well as every person using Park District property and programs, shall refrain from discriminating against or harassing any other person. Actions, words, jokes or comments based on an individual's sex, or any other legally protected characteristic will not be tolerated. Conduct commonly considered to be harassment includes, but is not limited to verbal, non-verbal, visual, physical, or electronic. Any employee engaging in practices or conduct constituting sexual or other harassment or discrimination of any kind shall be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

Any volunteer who feels they have been harassed should report any such complaint in full confidence to Human Resources or any member of Management with whom they feel comfortable. Any supervisor or manager who becomes aware of any possible harassment of or by any employee should immediately advise Human Resources, who will immediately investigate the conduct or ensure the matter is resolved.

Child Abuse and Mandated Reporter

As representatives of Palatine Park District you are required under the abused and neglected child reporting act to report any suspected abuse or neglect to minors. "Abuse" includes any physical injury, sexual abuse or mental injury inflicted by other than accidental means. "Neglect" includes the failure to provide adequate medical or personal care or maintenance, which failure results in physical or mental injury or in the deterioration of physical or mental condition. If an employee or volunteer wishes to have more training and information on mandated reporting, visit the DCFS website: <https://mr.dcfstraining.org/UserAuth/Login>

Park District representatives can call the hotline at 800-252-2873 or report suspicions to a supervisor however Palatine Park District prefers volunteers to report suspicions to a supervisor. There is no retaliation for reporting in good faith, however, willfully failing to report suspected child abuse or neglect can lead to being found guilty of a Class A misdemeanor.

Social Media and Networks Policy

In general Palatine Park District views personal websites, social media networks, and blogs positively and respects the right of employees to use them as a medium of self-expression. If a volunteer chooses to identify themselves as a volunteer of the Park District on personal platforms they become a de facto spokesperson of Palatine Park District. The District expects volunteers to observe the following rules and guidelines:

- Confidentiality rules and policies still apply and any volunteer who violates those rules will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.
- Make it clear to readers that the views expressed are the volunteers alone and do not reflect the views of Palatine Park District.
- If a volunteer chooses to say who they volunteer for, it is recommended that they put a disclaimer on their front page saying that they are not speaking officially on behalf of Palatine Park District. It is not necessary to post this notice on every page, but the volunteer should make reasonable efforts to draw attention to it – if possible, from the home page of the site.
- Do not disclose any information that is confidential or proprietary to Palatine Park District or to any third party that has disclosed information to Palatine Park District, including the logo or other images belonging to or affiliated with the agency.
- Since the site, blog or social network entries are a public space, be respectful to Palatine Park District, employees, patrons, partners, affiliates, and others.



Photographs

Photos taken at Palatine Park District programs and of District Patrons can only be used for the sole purpose of advertising on behalf of the park district. Only authorized representatives may take photos on district owned devices. Photos of minors and vulnerable adults are considered confidential and therefore volunteers cannot take photos and use them for personal media purposes.

Should a volunteer or staff member need or want to utilize pictures from district programs and events for a school or other presentation they must get prior approval and authorization through the Communications and Marketing department.

Record and Timekeeping

Palatine Park District maintains volunteer records in Amplify. In some cases, volunteers may be completing service hours required by external organizations. Volunteers who are required to have a service log signed by another organization should submit the form to their Event Supervisor or Volunteer Coordinator at the conclusion of each assignment.

District staff will only verify, and sign service logs for hours completed with the Palatine Park District and directly supervised by District staff.

Leaving the Organization

Volunteers may resign from service with the District at any time and should provide notice regarding any upcoming volunteer commitments. Upon separation, volunteers must return any Park District issued property, excluding apparel, to their Event Supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator.





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.

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

Before volunteering with the Palatine Park District, you must review and electronically sign the Volunteer agreement during the registration process.