

POLICY & PROCEDURE MANUAL

Recreation and Aquatics Programming

Department: Parks & Recreation

Policy Title: Volunteer Program and Background Screening Policy

Approval: September 6th, 2017

Revisions:

1. Volunteer Program Purpose

- 1.1. The intent of this policy is to take reasonable precautions to protect the youth, adults and elderly being served by volunteers and contracted staff in recreation programs offered by the Wrangell Parks and Recreation department and/or its partner volunteer organizations.

2. Volunteer Recruitment Policy

- 2.1. Recruitment of Volunteers shall be designed to attract potential and appropriate candidates from the community in response to the opportunities that are available at Wrangell Parks and Recreation. Equal opportunity will be provided to Volunteer applicants. No one has a right to be a volunteer in a Parks and Recreation Program and the selection and approval of volunteers shall be in the sole discretion of the Borough.

3. Purpose

- 3.1. To match volunteers with skills, experience and interest to the goals and objectives of our programs and to fulfilling the mission of the Wrangell Parks and Recreation.

4. Volunteer Standards of Conduct Policy

- 4.1. All volunteers and staff are expected to meet the Wrangell Parks and Recreation Standards of Conduct. Volunteers and staff shall fulfill their obligations and responsibilities in alignment with the values as outlined in the Goals and Objectives in the program description and manuals. Volunteers and staff shall serve clients in a conscientious, diligent, and efficient manner. Volunteers shall treat other volunteers and staff with respect and work cooperatively with them. They should treat Wrangell Parks and Recreation, its services and programs with dignity and respect. They should conduct themselves in a manner conducive to the well-being of Wrangell and Parks and Recreation and its members and program participants.

5. Conflict of Interest

- 5.1. Volunteers must act in the best interest of Wrangell Parks and Recreation and its program participants without any intention of obtaining direct or indirect benefit.

6. Representing the Organization

- 6.1. Volunteers must act as ambassadors and representatives of the Wrangell Parks and Recreation in performance of their duties in accordance with their written position descriptions and organizations policies and procedures.

7. Program Participant Confidentiality

- 7.1. Volunteers shall protect the privacy of program participants and hold in confidence all professionally acquired information concerning program participants, paid staff, board members and volunteers. They shall disclose such information only when legally obligated to do so.

8. Intoxicants

- 8.1. The use, purchase or sales of alcohol, marijuana or illegal drugs shall not be permitted while on duty or on the premises of Wrangell Parks and Recreation. All volunteers are prohibited from being under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs which impair performance and judgement while carrying out their duties.

9. Volunteer Screening Policy

- 9.1. It is the policy of the City and Borough that all individuals (16 and over) who are directly responsible for the safety and well-being of participants involved in Wrangell Parks and Recreation program on a regular basis will be subject to a background screening consisting of a sexual offender registry search and a criminal history search. Volunteers who work with or have any contact with youth under the age of 18, in the capacity of Coach, Volunteer, Instructor, or Counselor with any activity organized by or facilitated by the City and its Partner Volunteer organizations must successfully complete a criminal background check and be approved by the Director of Parks and Recreation.
- 9.2. Volunteers that serve on a one-time basis at events that are directly supervised by a Parks and Recreation employee do not need to be screened. For example, a volunteer assisting with grounds maintenance for The Helping Our Parks project would not need to be screened.

10. Screening Procedures

- 10.1. Parks and Recreation Department staff members will distribute Authorization for Background Check Consent Forms to all volunteers or to the parents of any volunteers under the age of 18. Information required includes name, driver's license number and state issued, date of birth, phone number and signature. All forms must be completed by the volunteer and returned to the Department Director or Recreation Coordinator.
- 10.2. The Director of Parks and Recreation or Recreation Coordinator will submit the background information to the Background Investigation Bureau (www.BIB.com) to conduct the screening. The results of the screen will be available to the Director and Recreation Coordinator through a password protected portal. If the results of the screening indicate that an individual has a record, it may be necessary for the Wrangell Police Department to review the results and advise Parks and Recreation as to the level of severity of the crime(s).
- 10.3. If any disqualifying offenses are reported in the background check, the Parks and Recreation Department staff will notify the volunteer that they are disqualified. It will be the responsibility of the Parks and Recreation Department staff to find another volunteer to take over the duties.

11. Disqualification Criteria Policy

- 11.1. No individual shall be permitted to volunteer for the Wrangell Parks and Recreation Department if the results of the background check show that the person has ever been convicted of or has a charge pending against them in which it is alleged that they have

committed a crime that falls under one of the following categories. Examples of crimes under each category are not exclusive.

- 11.1.1. **All Felony Offenses**-for example, kidnapping, aggravated burglary, carjacking, arson, drug related crimes, and assaults;
- 11.1.2. **All Sex Offenses**-for example, child molestation, sexual assault, rape, sexual battery, indecent exposure, child exploitation;
- 11.1.3. **All Violence Offenses**-for example, murder, manslaughter, aggravated assault, robbery, any offense involving a weapon.

12. Volunteer Screening Confidentiality

- 12.1. To help ensure confidentiality, the Wrangell Parks and Recreation Department staff will not be informed of the specifics resulting from a criminal background check. The criminal background checks will be maintained and secured as confidential records. It may be necessary for the Parks and Recreation Director to consult with the Borough Manager before making a decision about a volunteer based on the background check, and in such circumstances, the background check may be provided to the Borough Manager.

13. No Appeal

- 13.1. If a volunteer's background check includes a disqualifying charge, the Wrangell Parks and Recreation department shall immediately relieve a volunteer of their duties. There will be no appeal of a decision to relieve a volunteer. All decisions by the Municipality are final.

14. Factors to Consider

- 14.1. A conviction of a crime, other than a disqualifying crime, does not automatically preclude volunteer service, and individual circumstances will be considered. For crimes that do not fall into a disqualifying category, factors will be reviewed to determine if an individual can volunteer with the Department.
 - 14.1.1. **Type of offense**-The type of criminal offense matters with regard to the level of risk the person poses to the volunteer service they will be performing.
 - 14.1.2. **Context of offense**-The nature and severity of a crime, the number of convictions, progress since the crime occurred, cause and effect may impact whether an individual would be allowed to volunteer for the Department.
 - 14.1.3. **Time of offense**-Specific information such as how long it has been since the conviction occurred may affect the decision of allowing an individual to volunteer.
- 14.2. Based on an individual's background screening results, the Recreation Coordinator, Director, and the Borough Manager will determine whether an individual can volunteer based on the aforementioned factors to consider. All cases will be decided to keep the safety of the public as a top priority.

15. Volunteer Approval

- 15.1. Approval shall be valid for a period not to exceed twelve (12) months. Individuals who successfully pass the background check screening are not guaranteed a volunteer or instructor position with the City or partner organizations. The background check is just one step in the process.