



**SUBJECT:** Background Check / Volunteers

## **I. PURPOSE**

- \* To describe the terms and conditions under which background checks are conducted.
- \* Make the safety of all participants, particularly the most vulnerable groups (children, elderly and mentally challenged) a top priority.
- \* Keep individuals who have a history of inappropriate behavior or who are unfit to work in volunteer/professional settings out of the Department.

## **II. Policy**

Caddo Parish Parks and Recreation (CPPR) will conduct background checks on all volunteers age 18 or older-participating in Caddo Parks and Recreation recreational, athletic and related leisure service programs. Background checks are conducted to determine his/her suitability to serve as a parks and recreation volunteer.

All criminal background checks will be conducted by an approved agency/business.

The following criminal searches will be conducted:

- 1) Criminal background records/information
- 2) Sex Offender Registry Checks
- 3) Address Verification.

Applicants from outside of Caddo/Bossier or out of state, may be subject to further criminal searches.

The Parish of Caddo and Caddo Parish Parks and Recreation staff shall ensure all background checks are held in compliance with applicable federal and state statutes.

The Parish of Caddo / Caddo Parish Parks and Recreation staff reserves the right to make sole determination concerning information or any volunteer decision arising out of background check.

The Parish of Caddo and Caddo Parks and Recreation Administration shall require all volunteers and respective staff to be in compliance with this policy.

## **Criminal Convictions**

A person will be disqualified and prohibited from serving as a volunteer for Caddo Parish Parks and Recreation if the person has been found guilty of the following crimes. Guilty means that a person was found guilty following a trial, entered a guilty plea, entered a no contest plea accompanied by a court finding of guilty, regardless of whether there was an adjudication of guilt (conviction) or a withholding of guilt. This policy does not apply if criminal charges resulted in acquittal, Nolle Prose, expungement, or dismissal.

- All sexual offenses (regardless of the amount of time since the offense) - Examples include but are not- limited to: child molestation, rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, sodomy, prostitution, solicitation, indecent exposure.
- All felony Violence (regardless of the amount of time since the offense)- Examples include but are not limited to: murder, manslaughter, aggravated assault, kidnapping, robbery, aggravated burglary.
- Any crimes involving children (regardless of the amount of time since the offense)
- All felony offenses within the past ten (10) years- Examples include but are not limited to: drug offenses, gun offenses, theft, embezzlement, fraud.
- Misdemeanor - Violent offenses within the past five (5) years- Examples include but are not limited to: simple assault, battery, domestic violence (not involving children), if children were involved (lifetime ban), hit and run.
- Misdemeanor - Non-violent within the past three (3) years or multiple offenses in the past five (5) years- Examples include but are not limited to: driving under the influence, simple drug possession, public intoxication, marijuana possession, possession of drug paraphernalia, theft if person is handling monies.

**Pending Cases:** Anyone who has been charged for any of the disqualifying offenses or for cases pending in court may not be permitted to volunteer until the official adjudication of the case. Should any charges be uncovered or brought against the applicant during their time with Caddo Parish Parks and Recreation, the applicant shall be suspended until such time as the charges have been cleared or dropped and they are reinstated by Caddo Parish Parks and Recreation. The applicant is required to disclose any charges that are brought during their time with Caddo Parish Parks and Recreation to the designated parks staff.

## **General Guidelines**

### **Who will be screened?**

Background checks will be required for “all” volunteers. This includes full time, part-time volunteers and college interns. The background check must be complete and results verified before any volunteer begins. All volunteers will be screened on an annual basis.

## **Background Check Process**

Once an applicant request or has been identified to volunteer, the applicant must go to Caddo Parish Parks and Recreation (2900 Hearne Ave., Suite B) and complete Volunteer Application/Background Check Consent Form. Volunteer Applications are also available on the Caddo Parish Parks and Recreation website. Applicants who refuse to complete, sign and submit application/background check consent form will be disqualified.

Volunteer Application and Background Check Form(s) will then be processed by assigned staff and/or supervisor.

Results of the background check will be sent back directly to assigned staff and/or supervisor within 48 hrs.

Assigned staff and/or supervisor will review results of the report. If any discrepancies or criminal history are noted, respective staff will notify Assistant Director, Director, Legal or Human Resources for final determination.

If background check is returned with unfavorable results, respective supervisor or designee will notify the candidate via telephone, email or letter of his/her unapproved application. **Note:** Any applicant with pending court cases will not be permitted to volunteer until the official judication of the case is cleared.

If background check is favorable, staff will notify candidate via telephone, email or letter that he/she is approved.

Arrangements will be made for all volunteers to take picture for photo identification badge. After receiving photo identification badge, applicant is officially approved to begin volunteering. **Note:** Photo identification badges are to be displayed at all times when on official assignment and should not be worn or used for any other purpose than an official assignment.

## **Role & Responsibilities of Parks and Recreation Staff**

### **(General Volunteer Process)**

- \* Distribute Volunteer Application as requested by applicant. Volunteer Application will also be available on Caddo Parish Parks and Recreation website.
- \* Collect all completed applications.
- \* Process and forward to the approved background screening service provider.
- \* Receive the screening results from the service provider. If any discrepancies are noted, assigned employee will notify supervisor, Assistant Director /Director, Legal or Human Resources for final determination.
- \* If there are any problems processing or receiving application results, assigned staff/designee will contact the service provider.
- \* Make appropriate notification on any applicant who is approved to volunteer via phone call, email or letter.
- \* Make appropriate notifications on any volunteer who is disqualified via phone call, email or letter.
- \* Make arrangements for volunteers to receive volunteer credentials (Photo ID Badge, Volunteer T-Shirt, etc.).

### **(Group Volunteer Process)**

- 1) Groups interested in completing a beautification project should submit an inquiry on the Clean Parks Campaign group sign-up form on .
- 2) Volunteer Supervisor will review the request and coordinate a project based on Caddo Parish Parks and Recreation park improvements and maintenance needs for each park.
- 3) After a project is confirmed, the Volunteer Supervisor will send the volunteer group application to the group's leader for completion and it should be returned to the Volunteer Manager at least three (3) weeks before the project.
- 4) On the day of the project, each person in the volunteer group must complete necessary waivers and consent forms before the start of the project.

### **Privacy**

All volunteer applications, background check consent forms and related records received pursuant to the background check shall be maintained confidentially and kept in a secured file. Respective documents may only be accessed by appointing authority or his/her designee.