

## STANDARDS OF CARE FOR YOUTH RECREATION PROGRAMS

### I. GENERALLY

#### a. Definitions.

*City* means the City of League City.

*City council* means the City Council of League City.

*Department* means the parks and recreation department of the city.

*Parent(s)* will be used to represent one or both parent(s) or guardian(s) who have legal custody and authority to enroll their child(ren) in the city youth program.

*Parks and recreation superintendent* means the city parks and recreation department or his/her designee.

*Participant* means a youth whose parent(s) or guardian(s) who have legal custody and authority to enroll their child(ren) in the city youth program.

*Program leader* means the city parks and recreation department full-time, part-time staff, contract instructor or volunteer who has been assigned responsibility to implement the city's youth programs.

*Program manual* means the notebook of policies, procedures, required forms, and organizational and programming information relevant to city youth programs.

*Program site* means the area or facilities where city youth programs are held.

*Program staff* means the person or persons who have been hired or have volunteered to work for the city and have been assigned responsibility for managing, administering, or implementing some or all portions of the city youth programs. This definition also includes recreation supervisor, program leader.

*Recreation center* means one type of facility used to host any program as listed in the definition of "youth program(s)" above.

*Recreation supervisor* means the city parks and recreation department staff who has been assigned responsibility for city youth programs.

*Youth program(s)* means city youth programs consisting of the summer day camp program, mobile recreation program and other non-school day programs which last one week (five days) or longer.

#### b. Organization.

- i. The governing body of the city youth program is the city council.
- ii. Implementation of the youth program standards of care is the responsibility of the parks and recreation department director and departmental staff.

- iii. Youth programs to which these standards of care will apply are the summer day camp program, mobile recreation program and other non-school day programs that last one week or longer.
  - iv. Each program site will have a current copy of the standards of care available for public and staff.
  - v. Parents of participants will be provided a current copy of the standards of care available for public and staff.
  - vi. Criminal background checks will be conducted on prospective program staff. If results of that criminal check indicate that an applicant has been convicted of any of the following offenses, he or she will not be considered for employment:
    - 1. A felony or a misdemeanor classified as an offense against a person or family;
    - 2. A felony or a misdemeanor classified as public indecency;
    - 3. A felony or a misdemeanor violation of any law intended to control the possession or distribution of any controlled substance;
    - 4. Any offense involving moral turpitude; or
    - 5. Any offense that would potentially put the city at risk.
- c Inspection; monitoring; enforcement.
- i. A monthly inspection report will be initiated by the recreation leader of each youth program to conform compliance with the standards of care.
    - 1. Inspection reports will be sent to the recreation supervisor for review and kept on record for at least two years.
    - 2. The recreation supervisor will review the report and establish deadlines and criteria for compliance with the standards of care.
  - ii. The recreation supervisor will make visual inspections of the youth program based on the following schedule:
    - 1. The summer day camp youth program and mobile recreation youth program will be inspected twice during their summer schedule.
    - 2. The other non-school day youth programs will be inspected once during the school breaks. Complaints regarding enforcement of the standards of care and their resolution will be recorded by the recreation supervisor. Serious complaints regarding enforcement of the standards of care will be addressed by the parks and recreation superintendent and the complaints and the resolutions will be noted.
  - iii. The parks and recreation superintendent will make an annual report to the city council on the overall status of the youth programs and their operation relative to compliance with the adopted standards of care.
- d Enrollment. Before a child can become a youth program participant, the parents must sign registration forms that contain:
- i. The child's name, address and home telephone number;
  - ii. In case of an emergency contact names and telephone numbers during youth program hours;
  - iii. The names and telephone numbers of people to whom the child can be released;

- iv. A statement of the child's special problems and/or needs;
- v. Emergency medical authorization, doctor's name, telephone number;
- vi. A liability waiver; and
- vii. Designation of need for reasonable accommodations.

e. Suspicion of child abuse.

- i. Program staff will report suspected child abuse in accordance with the Texas Family Code, telephone, (409) 948-3481 or (713) 337-5125.
- ii. Program staff will receive basic training related to child abuse prevention and how to report suspected abuse.

## II. STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES AND TRAINING

a. Recreation supervisor—Qualifications.

- i. The recreation supervisor will be a professional staff of the city parks and recreation department and will be required to have all program leader qualifications as outlined in section 74-83.
- ii. The recreation supervisor must be at least 21 years old.
- iii. The recreation supervisor must have a bachelors degree from an accredited college or university or a minimum of one year of full-time recreation program supervision. Acceptable degrees include recreation administration or general recreation, physical education, horticulture, elementary or secondary education, biology, zoology, environmental education or any other comparable degree plan that would lend itself to working in a public recreation environment.
- iv. The recreation supervisor must have a minimum of one year experience planning and implementing recreation or educational activities.
- v. The recreation supervisor must be able to pass a background investigation including a test for illegal substances.
- vi. The recreation supervisor must have successfully completed a course in first aid and cardio pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) based on American Heart Association, American Red Cross or National Safety Council standards and have current certification.
- vii. The recreation supervisor must be able to furnish proof of a clear tuberculosis test taken within 12 months prior to their employment date.

b. Same—Responsibilities.

- i. The recreation supervisor is responsible for administrating the youth program's daily operations in compliance with the adopted standards of care.
- ii. The recreation supervisor is responsible for recommending for hiring, supervising and evaluating leaders.
- iii. The recreation supervisor is responsible for planning, implementing and evaluating youth programs.

c. Program leader—Qualifications.

- i. Leaders will be full-time, part-time, or temporary employees of the parks and recreation department or volunteers.

- ii. Leaders working with participants must be age 16 or older, however, each program site will have at least one staff 18 years or older present at all times and all leaders must be at least four years older than the participants they are working with.
  - iii. Leaders should be able to consistently exhibit competency, good judgement and self-control when working with participants.
  - iv. Leaders must relate to participants with courtesy, respect, tolerance and patience.
  - v. Leaders should have current certification in first aid and CPR based on either American Heart Association, American Red Cross or National Safety Council standards. At least one leader at each program site must have current certifications.
  - vi. Each leader applicant must be able to furnish proof of a clear tuberculosis test which was completed within the 12 months prior to their employment date.
  - vii. Leaders must pass a background investigation including a test for illegal substances.
- d. Same—Responsibilities.
- i. Leaders will be responsible for providing participants with an environment in which they can feel safe, enjoy wholesome recreation activities and participate in appropriate social opportunities with their peers.
  - ii. Leaders will be responsible to know and adhere to all city and departmental standards, policies and procedures that apply to the youth programs.
  - iii. Leaders must ensure that participants are released only to a parent or an adult designated by the parent. All program sites will have a copy of the department guidelines to verify the identity of a person authorized to pick up a participant if that person is not known to the leader.
- e. Training/orientation.
- i. The department is responsible to provide training and orientation to youth program staff in working with participants and for specific job responsibilities.
  - ii. Leaders must be familiar with the standards of care for youth programs as adopted by the city council.
  - iii. Program staff must be familiar with the department's policies including discipline, guidance and release of participants as outlined in the program manual.
  - iv. Program staff will be trained in appropriate procedures to handle emergencies.
  - v. Program staff will be trained annually in child protective training
  - vi. Program staff will be trained in areas including city, department and youth program policies and procedures, recreation activities organization, safety issues, program organization, and other areas as required by youth program assigned.
  - vii. Program staff will be required to sign an acknowledgment that they received the required training.
- f. Ratio of participants to staff.
- i. In a youth program, the standard ratio of participants to staff is 20 to one. In the event a leader is unable to report to the program site, a replacement will be assigned by the recreation supervisor.
  - ii. Each participant will have a program staff who is responsible for him or her and who is aware of details of the participant's habits, interests and any special problems as identified by the participant's parents during the registration process.

- g. Discipline.
  - i. Program staff will implement discipline and guidance in a consistent manner based on the best interests of participants.
  - ii. There will be no cruel treatment or harsh punishment.
  - iii. Program staff will use brief, supervised, separation (time out) from the group if necessary.
  - iv. As necessary, program staff will initiate discipline reports to the parent(s) of participants. Parents will be asked to sign participant discipline reports to indicate they have been advised about specific problems or incidents.
  - v. A sufficient number and/or severe nature of discipline reports, as detailed in the program manual, may result in a participant being suspended from the youth program.
  - vi. Participants will be removed from the program site as soon as possible in instances of danger to other participants or staff.
  
- h. Programming.
  - i. Program staff will provide cultural, educational and recreational programs for each group of participants according to their ages, interests and abilities. The activities will be appropriate to participant's health, safety and well-being. The activities also will be flexible and promote the participant's emotional, social and mental growth.
  - ii. Program staff will attempt to provide indoor and outdoor time periods to include:
    - 1. Alternating active and passive activities;
    - 2. Opportunity for individual, small and large group activities; and
    - 3. Outdoor time each day as weather permits based upon room availability and weather conditions.
  - iii. Program staff will be attentive and considerate of the participant's safety on field trips and during any transportation provided by the youth program.
    - 1. During field trips, program staff will have immediate access to emergency medical forms and emergency contact information for each participant.
    - 2. Program staff will have a written list of the participants in the group and must check the roll frequently, specifically before departure to and from destination.
    - 3. Program staff will have first aid supplies and a guide to first aid and emergency care available on field trips.
  
- i. Communication.
  - i. Each remote program site will have a pager to allow the site to be contacted by staff and each program site will have access to a telephone for use in contacting staff or making emergency telephone calls.
  - ii. At each program site the recreation supervisor will post the following telephone numbers adjacent to a telephone accessible to all program staff:
    - 1. City ambulance or emergency medical services.
    - 2. City police department.
    - 3. City fire department.
    - 4. Parks and recreation department administrative office.
    - 5. Numbers at which parents may be reached.
    - 6. Telephone number and address for the program site itself.

7. Telephone number of recreation supervisor's office.

j. Transportation.

- i. Before a participant can be transported to and from city sponsored activities, a transportation form, completed and signed by a parent of the participant, will be filed with the recreation supervisor.
- ii. First aid supplies and a first aid and emergency guide will be available in all youth program vehicles that transport participants.
- iii. All vehicles used for transporting participants will have a 6-BC portable fire extinguisher installed in the passenger compartment of the vehicle, accessible to the adult occupants.
- iv. Seat belts will be worn if provided.
- v. Participants will be oriented to expected behavior and safety rules.

III. FACILITY STANDARDS

a. Safety.

- i. Program staff will inspect program sites daily checking for sanitation and safety concerns that might affect the health and safety of the participants. A daily inspection will be completed by the program staff and kept on file by the recreation supervisor.
- ii. Buildings, grounds and equipment on the program site will be inspected, cleaned, repaired and maintained to protect the health of the participants.
- iii. Program site equipment and supplies will be safe for the participants use.
- iv. Program staff will have first aid supplies available at each program site in a designated location, during transportation, and for the duration of any off-site activity. Program staff will have an immediate access to a guide for first aid and emergency care.
- v. Program site air conditioners, electric fans and heaters will be mounted out of participant's reach or have safeguards that keep participants from being injured.
- vi. Program site porches and platforms more than 30 inches above the ground will be equipped with railings, except performance stages.

b. Fire.

- i. In case of fire, danger of fire, explosion or other emergency, program staff's first priority is to evacuate the participants to a predesignated safe area.
- ii. The program site will have an annual fire inspection by the local fire marshall, and the resulting report will detail any safety concerns observed. The report will be forwarded to the recreation supervisor who will review it and establish the deadline and criteria for compliance.
- iii. Each program site will have at least one fire extinguisher approved by the fire marshall readily available to all program staff. The fire extinguisher will be inspected monthly by the program leader and a monthly report will be forwarded to the recreation supervisor who will keep the report on file for a minimum of two years. All program staff will be trained in the proper use of fire extinguisher.
- iv. Fire drills will be initiated at program sites once during each session.

- c. Health.
  - i. Illness or injury.
    - 1. A participant who is considered to be a health or safety concern to other participants or staff will not be admitted to the youth program.
    - 2. Illnesses and injuries will be handled in a manner to protect the health of all participants and staff.
    - 3. Program staff will follow emergency procedures for injured participants or for participants with symptoms of an acute illness as specified in the program manual.
    - 4. Program staff will follow the recommendations of the state department of health concerning the admission or readmission of any participant after a communicable disease.
  - ii. Program staff has the option to administer medication. If the program staff exercises this option, they will administer medication only if:
    - 1. Parent(s) complete and sign a medication form that provides authorization for staff to dispense medication with details as to times and dosages. The form will include a hold harmless clause to protect the city.
    - 2. Prescription medications are in the original containers labeled with the participant's name, a date, directions and the physician's name. Program staff will administer the medication only as stated on the label. Program staff will not administer medication after the expiration date.
    - 3. Nonprescription medications are labeled with the participant's name and the date the medication was brought to the youth program. Nonprescription medication must be in the original container. The program staff will administer medication only according to label directions.
    - 4. Medications dispensed will be limited to routine oral ingestion, not requiring special knowledge or skills on the part of the program staff. No injections will be administered by the program staff.
    - 5. Program staff will ensure medications are inaccessible to participants. If necessary, medications will be kept in the refrigerator (when available). Medications will be kept separate from the food.
  - iii. Toilet facilities.
    - 1. The program site will have toilets located and equipped so participants can use them independently and program staff can monitor as needed.
    - 2. There will be one toilet for every 30 participants. Urinals may be counted in the ratio of toilets to participants but will not exceed 50 percent of the total number of toilets.
    - 3. An adequate number of lavatories will be provided.
  - iv. Sanitation.
    - 1. The indoor program sites must have adequate light, ventilation, air conditioning and heat.
    - 2. The program site will have an adequate supply of water meeting the state department of health standards for drinking water. Water will be supplied to the participants in a safe and sanitary manner.

3. Program staff will remove garbage from program sites daily.
4. All waste matters will be kept in a leakproof, covered container.