

## **CITY OF BURLESON PARKS AND RECREATION YOUTH PROGRAMS – STANDARDS OF CARE**

### **I. GENERAL INFORMATION/ADMINISTRATION**

- Purpose: To provide basic childcare regulations for recreation activities operated by the Burleson Parks and Recreation Department. This will allow the department to qualify for exemption from the requirements of the Texas Human Resources Code. The childcare programs offered by the Burleson Parks and Recreation Department are not licensed by the State of Texas. These standards of care are adopted by city ordinance pursuant to Section 42.041(b)(14) of the Texas Human Resources Code.
- Implementation: Oversight of all youth service programs will be the responsibility of the Burleson Parks and Recreation Department. Department leadership will supervise overall program components, while designated program and on-site staff will provide direct, day-to-day administration.
- Programs: These standards and regulations apply to all ongoing youth programs offered through the department. Program categories may include, but are not limited to, day camps, sports clinics, arts and cultural programs, agricultural and culinary experiences, and music or performance-based activities.
- Other: Each program location will keep a current copy of the Standards of Care available for both staff and the public. Parents or guardians will also receive a copy prior to the start of the program.
- Program Sites:
  - Burleson Recreation Center 550 NW Summercrest Blvd. Burleson, TX 76028
  - Russell Farm Art Center 405 W County Road 714 Burleson TX, 76028
  - Additional programs may also be hosted at City parks or other partnering facilities as appropriate.
- General Program Objectives
  - To offer a broad program with a wide variety of recreational activities, including sports, games, arts and crafts, education, drama, special events, field trips, and tournaments.
  - To provide a pleasant and memorable experience in a supportive and caring atmosphere.

- To ensure a safe environment that promotes the health, well-being, and welfare of all participants.
  - To teach children positive ways to spend their leisure time, supporting their emotional, physical, and social development.
  - To encourage inclusivity by welcoming participants of all abilities and backgrounds.
  - To promote creativity, teamwork, and problem-solving skills through diverse program experiences.
  - To strengthen community connections by fostering friendships, family involvement, and partnerships with local resources.
- Exemption Status: Once an exempt status is established, the Licensing Division of the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services will not monitor the recreational program. The Licensing Division will be responsible for investigating complaints of unlicensed childcare and for referring other complaints to the municipal authorities or, in the case of abuse/neglect allegations, to the Burleson Police Department.
  - Standards of Care Review: Standards will be reviewed annually and approved by the City Council after a public hearing is held to adopt an ordinance regarding section 42.041(b)(14) of the Human Resources Code.
  - These programs are recreational in nature and are not licensed child care facilities. Child Care Licensing will not regulate these programs nor investigate complaints related to them. The City of Burleson Parks and Recreation Department operates these programs as recreational opportunities for the community, not as state-licensed child care.
  - Parents, visitors, or staff are encouraged to share any concerns, feedback, or complaints by calling the Burleson Recreation Center at 817-426-9104. Calls will be directed to the appropriate supervisor for follow-up.

## **II. STAFFING**

- Staff Roles and Responsibilities
  - Program staff are responsible for supervising participants, leading activities, and maintaining a safe and positive environment. Staff are expected to keep accurate records (such as attendance and incident reports), follow established schedules while adapting as needed, and ensure program areas remain clean and organized. Staff must demonstrate strong communication and conflict resolution skills, uphold discipline and order, and model professionalism at all times. Other duties may be assigned as needed to support program operations.
- Qualifications
  - Minimum age of 16 to serve in program support roles, with direct child supervision requiring an adult (age 18 or older) present.

- Positive, professional attitude with the ability to work effectively with children, families, and peers.
  - Knowledge of age-appropriate activities and the ability to adapt them to meet participant needs.
  - Strong interpersonal skills, with the ability to engage respectfully and fairly with a diverse group of participants.
  - Ability to communicate effectively in a professional and authoritative manner.
  - Physical ability to perform job functions, which may include standing, walking, bending, reaching, swimming, and lifting up to 50 pounds (100 pounds with assistance).
  - Must successfully complete a criminal background check.
  - Must obtain and maintain certifications in First Aid and Child & Adult CPR/AED (training provided by the department).
- Criminal Background Checks
    - All prospective employees will undergo a criminal background check. Applicants may be disqualified if they have job-related criminal convictions.
  - Drug Testing
    - Prospective employees may be subject to drug testing prior to employment. Positive test results may disqualify an applicant from employment.
  - Staffing Ratios
    - Staff-to-participant ratios will be maintained in accordance with program type, age of participants, and activity setting. Ratios will be established to ensure appropriate supervision and participant safety across all age groups.

### **III. FACILITY STANDARDS**

- Emergency evacuation and participant relocation plans will be posted at each facility.
- Program employees will inspect sites frequently for sanitation and safety concerns and report issues to the appropriate Supervisor.
- Each program facility must have a fully stocked and up-to-date first aid kit, checked and restocked regularly.
- In any evacuation, staff will prioritize moving participants to a safe location.
- The Fire Marshall will inspect program sites annually, and Supervisors are responsible for compliance with directives.
- Fire extinguishers shall be available, inspected quarterly, and maintained for use.

- Emergency Action Plans will be reviewed during new staff orientation and reinforced in staff trainings.
- Medication will only be administered with written parental consent. Prescription and non-prescription medication must be in the original container, labeled with the child's name, and within expiration date.
- Participant medical, personal, and enrollment information will be kept confidential and accessible only to authorized staff and parents/guardians.
- Each indoor site shall have adequate restrooms and sinks accessible to children with appropriate staff supervision.
- All participants must be able to manage their own toileting and hygiene needs to be registered.
- Participants must wear appropriate footwear for safety.
- Emergency contact information and authorized pick-up persons must be on file for all participants.
- Only staff, registered participants, parents/guardians, and approved visitors are permitted in program areas.
- Program areas and equipment will be cleaned and sanitized regularly.
- Weather-related safety procedures will be followed, including heat protocols and severe weather sheltering. Outdoor activities will be modified or canceled when conditions pose a risk to participants.

#### **IV. SERVICE STANDARDS - STAFF**

This information will be provided to each staff member as part of new hire orientation:

- Staff must wear uniforms or staff shirts and appropriate attire, including footwear, at all times for easy identification.
- Participants and parents will be treated with respect at all times.
- Staff are responsible for the direct supervision of participants to ensure safety and well-being.

- Staff will take it upon themselves to resolve complaints. If unable to resolve immediately, staff will collect the customer's name and phone number, report the issue to a supervisor, and ensure timely follow-up.
- Staff will keep parents informed of planned activities and any changes to the schedule.
- Staff will document participant behavior (accomplishments, discipline issues, general activities) and communicate updates to parents as needed.
- Staff will monitor the sign-in/out log at all times and release children only to authorized persons.
- Staff shall clean program areas after each activity, including sweeping/vacuuming floors, stacking chairs, cleaning mirrors, and putting away supplies, recognizing that spaces are shared with other groups.
- Staff will dedicate their on-duty time to participants and parents to ensure a meaningful and pleasant experience.
- Prior to working with participants, staff will check messages and emails for the day.
- A certified lifeguard will be present at all times when participants or staff are in or around any pool or aquatic facility.
- Staff must avoid being alone with a child in a private setting; whenever possible, interactions should occur in group or visible areas.
- Staff are required to complete and maintain all mandatory training, including First Aid, CPR, AED, and emergency procedures.

## **V. OPERATIONAL ISSUES**

- Emergency phone numbers for fire, police, and ambulance services will be kept at each facility.
- A Program Manual is given to every staff member and includes discipline procedures, city rules and regulations, required forms, service standards, activity leadership, and guidelines for interacting with children. Additional copies are available at each site.
- Check-in/out procedures will be established for each program. Only adults listed on registration/release forms will be allowed to pick up children.

- Emergency evacuation and relocation plans will be posted at each facility.
- Parents will be notified of planned field trips and required to complete release forms.
- Secure enrollment records will be maintained for each participant and could include: child's name, date of birth, address, parent contact information, emergency contacts, physician's phone number, authorized pick-up persons, liability waivers, swim ability, medical/medication information, and releases. Records will be kept confidential and shared only with authorized staff and parents.
- Staff will immediately notify parents/guardians when a child is injured or involved in a situation that placed them at risk. Parents will also be notified of communicable disease outbreaks or infestations (e.g., lice) within participant groups.
- Medications will be stored securely and administered only with written parental consent, in accordance with labeling and expiration dates.
- Discipline and guidance must be consistent with children's needs and developmental levels. Harsh, cruel, or unusual punishment will not be permitted, including corporal punishment, humiliation, abusive language, food withholding, or isolation in locked/dark rooms.
- Brief, supervised separation from the group may be used when necessary. All disciplinary incidents must be documented and shared with parents, and ongoing issues may result in removal from the program.
- Participants must have immunizations as required by the Texas Department of State Health Services for school attendance.
- Ill children may not participate until a medical evaluation clears them. Staff will call 911 for any injury requiring professional medical attention and complete incident reports for all injuries.
- Staff are mandated reporters of suspected child abuse or neglect and must immediately work with their supervisor to make a report to law enforcement or the Department of Family and Protective Services. Staff will not face retaliation for good-faith reporting.

## **VI. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR CHILDREN**

- Children may not use the phone except in emergencies; staff will make the call on their behalf.

- Children must stay off elevated surfaces (tables, counters, ping pong tables, etc.).
- Children should walk inside the building; running is allowed only in designated areas.
- Bouncing or throwing balls is permitted only in designated areas.
- Active games using equipment that could damage windows, shades, lights, or ceilings must be played only in the gym.
- Children must respect staff, peers, and others' property, and treat all participants with inclusivity and fairness. Bullying, teasing, harassment, or exclusion of any participant is prohibited. Staff will intervene immediately to ensure all children are treated with respect and inclusivity
- Children must wear appropriate footwear at all times.
- Children must remain under close supervision and are not permitted to mix with the general public except during designated activities such as swim time or field trips. Staff are responsible for knowing the location of every child at all times.
- Children must follow staff instructions at all times, including during emergencies or drills.
- Failure to follow these guidelines may result in staff intervention, removal from an activity, or removal from the program if behavior endangers themselves or others.

## **VII. ACTIVITIES**

- Activities for each group will be planned according to participant age, interests, and abilities, and should be flexible to promote social, emotional, and educational development.
- All activities will be supervised to ensure safety, and staff-to-participant ratios will be maintained at all times.
- During field trips, staff will:
  - Conduct head counts before leaving the program site and before leaving the field trip site.
  - Carry each child's medical information, necessary medications, and a fully stocked first aid kit.
  - Carry a cellular phone for emergency use.
  - Ensure participants wear identifying shirts or other identifiers for easy recognition.
  - Follow all transportation safety procedures, including licensed drivers and seatbelt use if applicable. All vehicles will be maintained according to city safety standards.

- Reinforce participant behavior expectations and emergency procedures, including lost child protocols or severe weather responses.

#### **VIII. MONITORING AND ENFORCEMENT**

Standards of care established by the City of Burleson will be monitored and enforced by the city departments responsible for their respective areas:

- **Health and Safety Standards:** The City's Police, Fire, and Code Enforcement Departments will monitor and enforce facility safety, emergency preparedness, sanitation, and related health and safety requirements.
- **Staff and Program Standards:** The Burleson Parks and Recreation Department will monitor and enforce compliance with staff conduct, supervision, program operations, and participant care.

Non-compliance with these standards may result in corrective actions, including staff retraining, program adjustments, or other measures necessary to maintain participant safety and program quality.