

GOODLETTSVILLE PARKS & REC VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Volunteers In Parks



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Welcome to Goodlettsville's Volunteer In Parks (VIP) Program!

Director's Message

Dear Volunteer,

On behalf of the City of Goodlettsville, I want to thank you for your interest in serving as a Volunteer In Parks. We specifically chose that title for our program to be able to call you a VIP. We value your time and energy and hope that you will understand that you are a valuable part of our operations and programming. With you, we can do so much more to allow the people of Goodlettsville to enjoy the parks, facilities, and recreational options that exist.

Taking care of six parks, multiple facilities in each park, and conducting and hosting more than 20 events each year, along with more than 45 programs each week is a big effort. In addition to the hard work and dedication of our staff, we rely on volunteers like you to make our parks great and our recreational offerings people-centered.

We hope that the variety of volunteer options available offer something for everyone and thank you in advance for helping enhance the quality of life in Goodlettsville.

Amy Mitchell

Director of Parks and Recreation

We Value Volunteers

Volunteers In Parks commit personal time and effort, without compensation, to help the Department provide the community with a positive quality of life. Parks and Recreation encourages the involvement of volunteers and values their contributions to City parks, programs, and events.

Purpose of this Handbook

The purpose of this handbook is to provide guidance and basic information for individuals who volunteer with Goodlettsville Parks & Recreation.

Organizational Information

Goodlettsville Parks & Recreation is a department of the City of Goodlettsville. It was formed for the purpose of providing parks, facilities, and recreation programs for the community. The Department manages more than 200 acres of park land, a community center, splash pad, outdoor pool, a maintenance facility, 5 playgrounds, and multiple athletic fields. Residents enjoy a wide variety of outdoor activities as well as hundreds of recreational programs offered throughout the year. The department's staff are responsible for the maintenance, operation, and administration of the parks, facilities, and programs within its jurisdiction.

Mission Statement – What We Do

Goodlettsville Parks and Recreation is dedicated to developing, maintaining and coordinating parks, facilities and programs to enrich the quality of life of our community's residents and visitors.

Values – How We Operate

How We Operate We are committed to moving the department's Mission forward through actions guided by the following Values:

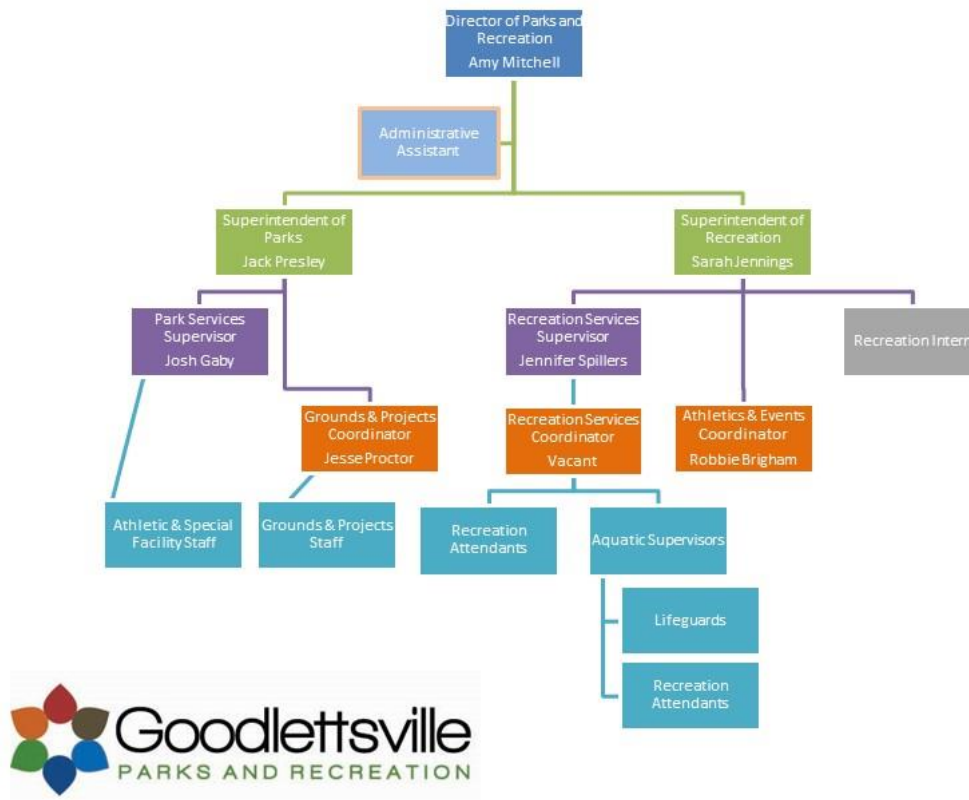
Integrity	Exhibiting trust and transparency in all our actions, or in other words, what you do when you think no one is watching.
Communication	Creating and setting clear expectations through timely and open conversation while effectively respecting the differences of others.
Accountability	Taking action and ownership for all work responsibilities, obligations to those we serve and ensuring 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.

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board serves in an advisory capacity to the Parks and Recreation Director in the formation of public park policy and facility development and management. Board members are selected from individuals who have an interest in park, recreational, social, and cultural activities in the various park and recreation facilities. Members must reside in the city limits of Goodlettsville. Members are appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the Board of Commissioners. The board consists of seven (7) members and a term of service is three (3) years.

Organizational Chart

As shown, Goodlettsville Parks & Recreation is comprised of two divisions: Parks and Recreation, each with a Superintendent who is tasked with overall management and a staff that tends to the operational needs of the Department. Each division has an area of responsibility and both divisions work together to provide quality facilities and programs.



Helpful Information about Goodlettsville Parks & Recreation

Contact Information

Phone

- Customer Service Center Monday – Friday from 8:00am to 4:30pm at 615.851.2200
- After 4:30 and on Saturdays, Community Center staff can be reached at 615.851.2253
- After Hours and on Weekends, Parks Maintenance staff can be reached at 615.804.2311

Parks & Recreation Webpage

www.goodlettsvilleparks.com

Parks & Recreation Email

goodlettsvilleparks@goodlettsville.gov

Volunteers In Parks Program

The Volunteers In Parks program seeks to harness the skills, knowledge, and enthusiasm of community members to augment and improve City parks, program, and events. The Volunteer Program provides a structured way to recruit, train, track, and recognize volunteers with Goodlettsville Parks and Recreation.

Webpage

<https://tn-goodlettsville3.civicplus.com/1143/VIPs---Volunteers-In-Parks>

What Volunteers Can Expect from Goodlettsville Parks & Recreation

Volunteers who assist the Department can expect to:

- Work in a healthy and safe environment and to be treated with respect
- Be given the on-boarding, orientation, and training necessary to fulfill each role
- Be given a copy of the volunteer manual and any procedures that affect each role
- Have a role description and agreed upon hours of contribution

What Goodlettsville Parks & Recreation Expects from Volunteers

Throughout their time of service, volunteers should:

- Be reliable
- Be accountable for all actions
- Be committed to the organization
- Let the supervisor know as soon as possible if they are unable to keep their commitment
- Respect confidentiality of participants and staff
- Not discuss situations or individuals
- Carry out the specified role according to the position description
- Ask for support when needed
- Behave appropriately at all times and be courteous to the public, staff, and other volunteers
- Value and support other team members
- Ensure the safety of themselves and others by following policies and procedures
- Discuss any issues they may have regarding the Department with their supervisor or the Parks and Recreation Director
- Not denigrate the Department to the public, staff, or other volunteers
- Give notice before leaving the Volunteer Program

Volunteer Information

Eligibility Requirements

Goodlettsville Parks & Recreation welcomes all volunteers. Each person must submit a completed volunteer application, a signed waiver and, when required, successfully pass a background screening. Volunteers may choose the opportunities that are of interest to them. Some roles have age restrictions or other requirements, so volunteers should carefully read the details provided for each role on signup.com when making a commitment. Volunteers with questions or concerns regarding a volunteer opportunity or the roles available should contact the Parks and Recreation Director.

Types of Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteer opportunities with Parks & Recreation fall into two categories: one-time volunteer events and ongoing volunteer.

One-time volunteer events include most Park Beautification and Maintenance Projects, special events, group projects, and days of service.

Ongoing volunteer positions are those that involve a longer and recurring commitment of time, such as assisting with programs, technology projects, greeters, and coaches.

Background Screenings

It is the policy of Goodlettsville Parks & Recreation that all volunteers 18 and older, and those working with minors and vulnerable adults, as well as volunteers with positions involving sensitive and/or confidential information, must successfully pass a background screening prior to beginning their first volunteer commitment and every year thereafter. Volunteers will be notified if their position requires a background check. Individuals that are interested in volunteering for sensitive positions that refuse to comply with this request or fail to meet the standard of background checks will not be permitted to volunteer. Background checks are conducted by an independent service contracted by the Department and all information provided during the screening process is between the applicant and the service provider. The Department receives a report indicating the pass/fail results. Goodlettsville Parks & Recreation's Criminal Background Check policy is available on the volunteer web page.

Photo Releases

When signing the volunteer application, volunteers are giving their consent for Goodlettsville Parks & Recreation to use any photos or video coverage of themselves, and/or minor child/ward in future publications and promotional materials. Photos and videos remain the property of Goodlettsville Parks & Recreation.

Orientation and Training

Goodlettsville Parks & Recreation volunteers are given a volunteer manual during their onboarding process. This manual contains guidelines for the volunteer program and the policies that govern it. At each event or program, volunteers will receive role-specific training prior to beginning service. For one-time volunteer opportunities, volunteer shifts begin with demonstrations or training for the duties required. For ongoing volunteer positions, orientation and training is provided by the staff in the program area.

Volunteer Conduct

Every Goodlettsville Parks & Recreation 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 Supervisor or the Director of Parks and Recreation that will benefit the Department and its patrons by saving time, reducing waste,

promoting safety, increasing efficiency, or improving the experience for participants. Department volunteers are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of professional integrity, honesty, and responsibility. Volunteers represent the Department to patrons and while volunteering should treat everyone with respect and courtesy. Goodlettsville Parks & Recreation has many policies that govern employment with the Department, its operations, and the way business is conducted, but these policies may not apply to those in a volunteer role. The common-sense rules and guidelines which are provided here are designed to promote orderly, efficient, and safe operations and have been developed from years of experience by Department staff. Volunteers are expected to read the rules and conduct themselves accordingly.

Media Inquiries

Members of the media are occasionally present at Goodlettsville Parks & Recreation programs. As private citizens, volunteers may freely address any questions that might be asked. However, as a Department Volunteer, all media inquiries should be directed to staff or the event coordinator. Volunteers are not authorized to speak on behalf of the City of Goodlettsville regarding City matters.

Communication with Park Users and Program Participants

What you do and say matters. You may be the first contact someone has with Goodlettsville Parks & Recreation and you will have the responsibility of making a good first impression. Please refrain from sharing personal opinions regarding park policies and other park matters. If you have feedback, share it as outlined in this document.

When to not answer a question. We all want to make park users happy, however, if you are approached by someone with a question that you do not know the answer to, please be honest and say that you do not know the answer, but will get the information to the right contact for follow up. If you do not know who the right contact is, direct them to call the Customer Service Center (615-851-2200) for assistance or to email goodlettsvilleparks@goodlettsville.gov. If the answer is needed during the activity or event that is taking place, direct the person to your supervisor.

Attendance

Volunteer attendance is important to the success of each program and event. When volunteers sign up for a volunteer commitment, Goodlettsville Parks & Recreation is relying on them to fill that role. If volunteers know prior to the event that they cannot meet their commitment, they should remove themselves from signup.com so another volunteer can fill the role. On event day, should an emergency occur, volunteers who are unable to meet their commitment should notify their supervisor as soon as possible.

Dress Code

Unless provided with other directions from the supervisor, volunteers should wear their complimentary Goodlettsville Parks & Recreation volunteer t-shirt with pants/shorts of an appropriate length. Clothes need to be clean and in good repair (no holes). To protect feet, closed toe shoes are preferred. Volunteers should dress for the weather, including any outerwear that may be needed.

What to Bring

- A positive helpful attitude
- Water bottle
- Appropriate outerwear, sunscreen, or umbrella if needed for outdoor events
- Volunteer log sheet (if required)

Cell Phones

Volunteers are expected to give their complete attention to their duties. For this reason cell phone use while on duty is not permitted. Cell phones may only be used in the event of an emergency to inform Department staff or first responders of the emergency situation. Volunteers who need to make or receive a personal calls or text messages while on duty should inform their supervisor.

Confidentiality

Out of respect for the privacy and rights of all individuals associated with the Department, personal observations and opinions should be kept in confidence. Volunteers are expected to keep any information that they are formally or informally exposed to during their time as a volunteer in confidence. Volunteers who have questions or concerns regarding any information they have seen or heard should discuss it with their supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator. This confidentiality helps maintain a safe and trusted environment for employees, volunteers and patrons of Goodlettsville Parks & Recreation.

Discrimination

Parks & Recreation prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, ancestry, age, disability, marital status or sexual orientation.

Volunteer Recognition

Parks & Recreation recognizes our volunteers annually with a volunteer appreciation event. Volunteers are also periodically given the spotlight on Parks and Rec's webpage, social media, and newsletters to highlight accomplishments and underscore the value volunteers bring to the community.

Feedback, Concerns and Comments

If you have comments or suggestions to improve your volunteer placement or experience, or have concerns about something, bring these issues to the Director of Parks and Recreation or onsite staff supervisor at the earliest time possible. Volunteer feedback is welcome at any time.

Resignation

To voluntarily end your volunteer commitment with Parks & Recreation, please inform the Director of Parks and Recreation as soon as possible.

Termination/Separation

The need to dismiss a volunteer is rare, but sometimes is required for the safety and protection of volunteers, staff, and citizens. These behaviors will result in termination:

- Theft, misuse, destruction or defacement of property
- Inappropriate behavior toward visitors, program participants, other volunteers or staff
- Working under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Possession of weapons or illegal drugs at a volunteer work site
- Excessive tardiness or repeated unexcused absences
- Excessive failure to perform assigned or agreed upon duties, or follow direction given by staff supervisor

Parks & Recreation reserves the right to terminate any volunteer who does not adhere to City of Goodlettsville policies and procedures or who fails to satisfactorily perform his or her volunteer assignments. Parks & Recreation may elect to separate volunteers if the Department determines there is no longer a benefit or need for the service.

Risk Management

The City of Goodlettsville provides emergency response procedures to ensure a safe environment for event/program participants, staff members, and volunteers. If at any time an unsafe condition is observed, the volunteer should immediately bring the situation to the attention of the supervisor or the Director of Parks and Recreation. They will make any necessary corrections and notify the appropriate staff.

Safety in the Workplace

It is Goodlettsville Parks & Recreation's intention to provide a safe environment for its volunteers, employees, and patrons. Safety is everyone's responsibility and volunteers are expected to observe safety rules and regulations, exercise caution, and perform their assigned duties in a manner that will avoid injury or create hazardous conditions. Safety and loss prevention should be a matter of concern equal in importance with all other operational considerations and volunteers are expected to be alert for safety issues or hazards. Any and all unsafe conditions or equipment must be reported immediately upon discovery so corrective actions can be taken. Carelessness, inattention, neglect, and disregard for safety rules can cause accidents. Volunteer duties should be performed in a safe manner.

Volunteer Use of Tools

Parks and Recreation has implemented guidelines for the tools that may be used by Basic through Advanced Volunteers. Please refer to the List of Approved Tools and Equipment for Volunteer Use for guidance on what hand tools are allowed during basic volunteer service in our parks and facilities (see Appendix). Volunteers wishing to operate power tools must be 18 years of age and older and must undergo safety training with the Department staff to receive certification on each approved power tool, thereby becoming Advanced volunteers. The City does not provide power tools for volunteer use. Advanced volunteers must supply their own tools; however, they do so at their own will and risk. The City of Goodlettsville is not responsible for tools breaking or wear and tear.

Injury/Incident Reporting

Report any injury, accident, or incident that occurs while volunteering to the on-site staff supervisor immediately. If the injury or accident is an emergency, call 911. If an on-site supervisor is not present, report it to the Director of Parks and Recreation within 24 hours so that a report can be completed.

Severe Weather Policy

Goodlettsville Parks & Recreation offers hundreds of programs, activities, services, and hosted events throughout the year. The Department is committed to the safety and well-being of all participants, volunteers, and staff associated with this effort. Much of the Department's programming is held outdoors and is subject to weather conditions. The Department may use warning systems and information provided by the National Weather Service when making decisions regarding inclement weather. Under such circumstances, the Department will take all reasonable precautions to determine necessary or appropriate actions including, but not limited to:

- closure of the Department, or any Department owned or controlled indoor or outdoor facility;
- cancellation, suspension, or delay of programming; or,
- if practical, programming relocation or modification

Alcohol and Drug Use Policy

Goodlettsville Parks & Recreation provides a safe, drug free work environment. It is expected that all personnel (employees and volunteers) report to work and remain in a condition suitable to perform their duties at the highest level of efficiency. The unlawful manufacturing, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of drugs or alcohol by volunteers is prohibited on Department property or when volunteering for the Department.

Violence Free Work Environment

Goodlettsville Parks & Recreation promotes a safe work environment for all volunteers and does not tolerate any type of violent behavior committed by or against volunteers. Threatening or violent behavior committed by anyone against volunteers, employees, or program participants will not be tolerated. Such behavior may include but is not limited to:

- Physical injury to another person
- Threats
- Behavior that creates a reasonable fear of injury
- Intentionally causing damage to Department property or property of another person
- Possession of weapons (i.e.: knives, clubs, explosive devices, etc.) on Department property or at Department sponsored activities
- Committing acts motivated by, or related to, sexual harassment or domestic violence

Statements or gestures which in any way suggest that an individual may engage in violent conduct will be taken seriously by the Department and responded to appropriately.

Volunteers have a responsibility to immediately report a potentially dangerous situation or unauthorized individual(s) on Goodlettsville Parks & Recreation premises to their supervisor.

Incidents involving violent behavior by a volunteer may warrant removal of the individual until further evaluation determines their suitability for returning. A volunteer suspected of violent behavior may be placed on leave during an investigation until a course of action is determined.

FAQs

How do interested individuals sign up for an opportunity?

Most volunteer opportunities are found on our volunteer [webpage](#).

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

Volunteers will be contacted by the event coordinator or volunteer coordinator as soon as event updates or changes are determined. Volunteers will also be provided with event day contact information prior to event day.

How do volunteers cancel a commitment?

Prior to event day and if [signup.com](#) was used to select a role, volunteers should remove their name from that role on [signup.com](#) ASAP to allow another volunteer time to fill the role. To cancel on event day, call the provided event day contact. If the role is a regularly scheduled one, call the provided contact person to inform them of the absence.

Who do volunteers contact in an emergency?

In the event of an emergency, volunteers should call 911 then contact the event's volunteer supervisor.

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

Generally, yes, provided that they have filled out the application and waiver and have passed the required background check (ages 18 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 Goodlettsville Parks & Recreation Volunteer In Parks Program. All volunteers must complete their own volunteer application form, volunteer waiver, and volunteer onboarding process.

Approved Tools and Equipment for Volunteer Use

General Requirements	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No volunteer under the age of 18 can use power tools. All volunteers must wear closed-toe shoes, gloves, eye protection, and ear plugs (for power tools). Those volunteers wishing to operate tools listed in the Advanced Volunteer section must undergo training. Volunteers with professional gardening experience may provide a copy of their license/certification to forego the training component. The City does not provide power tools for volunteer use; volunteers must use their own power tools; however, they do so at their own will and risk. The City is not responsible for tools breaking down. Prohibited Equipment: tractors, backhoes, skid steer loaders, riding mowers, chainsaws, fork lifts, wood chippers, boom & scissor lifts, and backpack, hand-held or truck-mounted pesticide application sprayer or spreader. 	
Basic Volunteer	
TOOL DESCRIPTION	TRAINING
AGE 10 AND OVER	
Shovels	Onsite demonstration of safe use
Hoes	Onsite demonstration of safe use
Brooms & Rakes	Onsite demonstration of safe use
Litter Stick & Bucket	Onsite demonstration of safe use
Wheelbarrows	Onsite demonstration of safe use
Basic Hand Tools (wrenches, hammers, screwdrivers)	Onsite demonstration of safe use
AGE 14 AND OVER	
Palm Sanders	Onsite demonstration of safe use
Loppers	Onsite demonstration of safe use
Hand Shears	Onsite demonstration of safe use
Pitchfork	Onsite demonstration of safe use
Digging Bar	Onsite demonstration of safe use
Post Hole Digger (Manual)	Onsite demonstration of safe use
Stake Pounder	Onsite demonstration of safe use
18 AND OVER	
Pick	Onsite demonstration of safe use
Week Whip	Onsite demonstration of safe use
Turfroller	Onsite demonstration of safe use
Advanced Volunteer	
Power Drill	Must complete required training prior to use
Line Trimmer	Must complete required training prior to use
Leaf Blower – Hand Held	Must complete required training prior to use
Leaf Blower – Backpack	Must complete required training prior to use
Cold Water Pressure Washer	Must complete required training prior to use
Power Hedge Trimmer	Must complete required training prior to use
Walk Behind Mower	Must complete required training prior to use
Power Sander	Must complete required training prior to use
Power Post Hold Digger	Must complete required training prior to use