

# VOLUNTEER SERVICES

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## Handbook



**Cleveland  
Metroparks®**



**CLEVELAND  
METROPARKS ZOO®**

SECURING A FUTURE FOR WILDLIFE

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*Revised April 2019*

# Welcome

Dear Cleveland Metroparks Volunteer:

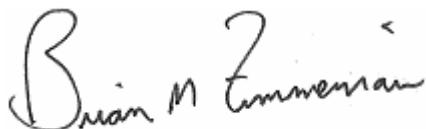
On behalf of the Board of Park Commissioners, myself, and Cleveland Metroparks staff, we welcome you to Cleveland Metroparks!

Volunteers are among a unique group of people who make the extraordinary commitment to contribute your time to help support the mission of Cleveland Metroparks. As a volunteer, you join a team of Cleveland Metroparks staff and other volunteers who help the Park District accomplish its goals of conservation, education and recreation. The work you do will contribute largely to the continued success of Cleveland Metroparks mission, vision and goals.

Together, the staff and volunteers of Cleveland Metroparks strive to provide guests with the highest quality experience possible. Without you, we would not have the ability to offer hundreds of programs and provide many enhanced services to guests.

Thank you for making the time to offer your talents, skills and expertise to improve the quality of Cleveland Metroparks. We hope that through your volunteer experiences, you are able to develop new skills, make new acquaintances and have a rewarding and enjoyable experience.

Sincerely,



Brian M. Zimmerman  
Chief Executive Officer



Harold G. Harrison  
Chief Human Resources Officer



## Section 1: Use of Volunteer Handbook

The purpose of this Handbook is to provide each volunteer with valuable information about their service with Cleveland Metroparks. This Handbook does not constitute an expressed or implied contract of any kind and is not intended to be all inclusive. Rather, this Handbook provides a working guide for staff and volunteers. Certain questions may not be answered in this Handbook. Situations will arise which will require administrative interpretation. Volunteers should consult with their direct supervisor and/or Volunteer Services regarding interpretation of policies and procedures.

### Nature of Volunteerism

All volunteers perform hours of service for Cleveland Metroparks for civic, charitable, or humanitarian reasons. Volunteers should have no expectation of receipt of compensation for services rendered. Volunteers offer their services to Cleveland Metroparks freely and without any direct or indirect pressure to do so.

### Volunteer Responsibility

It is each volunteer's responsibility to read this Handbook in its entirety and remain aware of all revisions to the Handbook. Each volunteer formally acknowledged this responsibility when completing their volunteer application.

Cleveland Metroparks reserves the right to terminate the services of any volunteer who is not in compliance with the policies of the Volunteer Handbook or the policies of Cleveland Metroparks.

### Availability of Handbook

The most current version of the Handbook is located on the Home tab of Volgistics. In furtherance of its conservation mission, Cleveland Metroparks does not provide printed copies of this Handbook to volunteers. Volunteers can request an electronic copy to be e-mailed to them from Volunteer Services at any time.

### Updates and Revisions

Cleveland Metroparks reserves the right, at any time with or without notice, to make any changes in the policies, procedures, benefits and practices set forth in this Volunteer Handbook. Volunteer Services will endeavor to effectively communicate any policy changes to all volunteers. Again, though, it is each volunteer's responsibility to remain aware of all revisions to this Handbook.

## Section 2: Cleveland Metroparks Culture

### Overview of Cleveland Metroparks

#### History of Cleveland Metroparks

The Cleveland Metropolitan Park District was born in 1917, the initiative of a young Cleveland City Parks engineer who had conceived the idea of an outer chain of parks with connecting boulevards some 12 years earlier. [William Stinchcomb's](#) genius was to anticipate the future need for open space at a time when Cuyahoga County outside of Cleveland was still largely rural. The new Metropolitan Park District would protect the scenic beauty of the river and creek valleys surrounding Greater Cleveland and provide much needed recreational space.

The Cleveland Zoological Park first opened in 1882 at Wade Park where the Cleveland Museum of Art now stands. In 1907, the City of Cleveland moved the Zoo to its current location in Old Brooklyn. In 1957, the Cleveland Zoological Society assumed control of the Zoo. In 1968, the City of

Cleveland transferred ownership of the Zoo to Cleveland Metroparks and the Cleveland Zoological Society transferred management of the Zoo to Cleveland Metroparks in 1975.

Cleveland Metroparks is now the largest landholder in Cuyahoga County and is responsible for the management of 18 distinct reservations, including more than 100 miles of parkways, eight golf courses, five nature centers and Cleveland Metroparks Zoo.

Cleveland Metroparks is a beautiful and diverse network of greenspace, known as the “Emerald Necklace,” devoted to conservation, education and recreation. Its reservations are minutes away from just about every county resident, no matter which part of town they live in.

## **Mission**

Cleveland Metroparks will conserve significant natural resources and enhance people's lives by integrating high-quality outdoor education, recreation and zoological opportunities into people's lives.

- **Conservation Policy:** Conservation of natural resources is the primary responsibility of Cleveland Metroparks both within its local region and globally.
- **Education Policy:** Cleveland Metroparks will foster awareness, appreciation, and understanding of natural resources so that we may all become better stewards of the environment.
- **Recreation Policy:** Cleveland Metroparks will provide recreation opportunities that connect people to nature and promote community health and well-being consistent with the goals of conservation and education.

## **Strategic Vision**

Cleveland Metroparks will be a national leader for sustainable green infrastructure that provides essential environmental, economic, and community benefits for people in its core service area, the surrounding region, and the global reach of Cleveland Metroparks Zoo.

The [Cleveland Metroparks Strategic Plan](#), completed in 2012, provides direction and guidance for Cleveland Metroparks. As accomplishments occur towards the original key directions, the organization has updated the document to focus on five strategic goals for the coming years:

- **Protection** – Implement natural resource and green infrastructure practices to create and manage urban park spaces more resilient to ecological change and disturbance as part of the surrounding and regional community.
- **Relevancy** – Strengthen the relevancy of the Emerald Necklace and Cleveland Metroparks Zoo as the park system enters its second century. Affirm the Park District's role and identity in response to changes in demographics and economics and continue to emphasize conservation education. Support the resurgence of the City of Cleveland and the inner ring suburbs.
- **Connections** – Advance connections and trail systems that complete the Emerald Necklace and, in partnership with other agencies and communities, connect with local, state and regional trail networks, communities and places of interest.
- **Come Out & Play** – Expand and strengthen outdoor experiences and recreation opportunities consistent with the organization's mission, and keep pace with market trends to contribute to the region's attractiveness as a place to live, work and play.
- **Organizational Sustainability** – Continue sustainable business practices to support Cleveland Metroparks capital, operations, and maintenance needs into the future.

## **Organization of Cleveland Metroparks**

Cleveland Metroparks is a separate political subdivision of the State of Ohio. Cleveland Metroparks is governed by the Board of Park Commissioners of the Cleveland Metropolitan Park District (“Board”), composed of three citizens who serve three-year terms without compensation. Board members are appointed by the presiding Judge of the Probate Court of Cuyahoga County. The powers and duties of the Board are set forth in the [Ohio Revised Code](#) and the Board’s [By-Laws](#).

The Board appoints a Chief Executive Officer (“CEO”), who is responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of the Park District. The CEO is responsible for hiring, supervising and evaluating Cleveland Metroparks employees; planning and supervising improvements to Cleveland Metroparks property; representing Cleveland Metroparks at all regional, state and professional park-related organizations; organizing and reporting to the Board at all regular and special meetings; and such other and additional duties as the Board may reasonably assign from time to time. The CEO also has authority to certify vouchers approved by the Board for payment and to sign, as authorized, all legal documents for and on behalf of the Board.

The Board also appoints a Chief Financial Officer (“CFO”), who serves as a custodian of all Cleveland Metroparks funds. The CFO is responsible for developing financial and purchasing policies that govern the day-to-day financial transactions by Cleveland Metroparks. The CFO also has authority to sign all checks for payment of Board approved and CEO certified payables, including payroll checks.

## **Core Values**

Core values are deeply held beliefs shared by employees and volunteers and serve as Cleveland Metroparks foundational tenets of daily work and decision-making, including hiring and retention. Employees and volunteers are expected to perform their work in a manner that is in alignment with the following values:

- **Guest Focus** – We recognize that we exist to serve our guests and that each interaction with a visitor or member of the public is an opportunity to deliver on the promises of our mission. Because of this, we will always place the guest and their experience first.
- **Dignity and Respect** – We believe that dignity and respect are the foundations for the way we conduct all of our personal and organizational business. Fairness, sincerity and compassion are integral to this value.
- **Integrity** – We believe that integrity is the guidepost in all our affairs as it is required to earn and promote the trust of all stakeholders. Integrity cannot exist without honesty and truth.
- **Professionalism** – We believe professional excellence will result when we take pride in our work including our dependability, punctuality and attention to detail.
- **Sustainability** – We believe that we must efficiently use all living, natural and financial resources in a sustainable manner that shows compassion, humility and wisdom, striking a balance between the needs of today with challenges of the future.
- **Teamwork** – We recognize that the strength of our team comes from dynamic differences in backgrounds, cultures and beliefs. We will draw on and celebrate the diversity of our stakeholders and in other ways encourage individuals to demonstrate loyalty and work together as one toward our common goals.

# **Equal Opportunity**

## **Equal Opportunity Policy**

It is the policy of Cleveland Metroparks to ensure equal volunteer opportunity without discrimination or harassment on the basis of age, color, gender, gender identity or expression, genetic information, mental or physical disability, military status, national origin, pregnancy, race, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law. Cleveland Metroparks also prohibits retaliation against any volunteer who files a charge of discrimination, complains to management about discrimination, or because they participated in a discrimination proceeding (such as an investigation or lawsuit).

Every Cleveland Metroparks volunteer must contribute to a workplace that is free from unlawful discrimination and harassment, demonstrate respect and celebrate diversity, and strive to build a more inclusive work environment.

## **Harassment and Discrimination Prevention**

To promote a respectful and productive working environment, Cleveland Metroparks will not tolerate the harassment of any individual. Cleveland Metroparks defines "harassment" as either:

- The creation of any hostile or intimidating work environment in which verbal or physical conduct is so severe or pervasive enough to cause significant interference with an employee or volunteer's work; or
- Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual.

This includes harassment based upon an individual's age, color, gender, gender identity or expression, genetic information, mental or physical disability, military status, national origin, pregnancy, race, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law.

Volunteers who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination as a Cleveland Metroparks volunteer.

## **Reporting Harassment or Discrimination**

Cleveland Metroparks encourages reporting of all perceived incidents of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation. Prompt reporting of complaints or concerns allows for intervention and resolution of behaviors before they become severe or pervasive.

### **Reporting Process**

Cleveland Metroparks volunteers can report perceived incidents of discrimination, harassment or retaliation to their direct supervisor, or Director of Volunteer Services.

### **Investigation Process**

Upon receiving a report of discrimination, harassment or retaliation, the Director of Volunteer Services will initiate a prompt, thorough, and impartial investigation regarding the allegations. This investigation may include interviews with or collection of written statements from the volunteer who filed the report, the volunteer alleged to have committed the act of discrimination, harassment or retaliation and any other relevant fact witnesses. The Director of Volunteer Services may also review relevant documentation and records, including, but not limited to, e-mail and other electronic records.

## Confidentiality

Cleveland Metroparks will protect the confidentiality of allegations to the extent possible. Cleveland Metroparks cannot guarantee complete confidentiality, since it cannot conduct effective investigation without revealing certain information to witnesses and the charged party. Information regarding the allegations, though, will only be shared to the minimum extent necessary to conduct an effective investigation. Volunteer Services will maintain the confidentiality of any records associated with the investigation to the extent permitted by the Ohio Public Records Law or other applicable law.

## Anti-Retaliation Policy

Cleveland Metroparks will not tolerate any adverse treatment of volunteers because they reported perceived acts of discrimination, harassment or retaliation or provide information related to such complaints. Volunteers who feel that they are being retaliated against for opposing discrimination or harassment should immediately report their concerns in accordance with this policy.

## Remedial Action

Cleveland Metroparks will take immediate and appropriate corrective action, including disciplinary action, whenever it determines that discrimination, harassment or retaliation has occurred in violation of this policy. The corrective action is designed to stop the harassment, correct its effects on the volunteer, and ensure that the harassment does not recur. This corrective action may not be that which the affected volunteer requests or prefers, so long as the action is effective in eliminating the discrimination and/or harassment.

## **Disability Accommodation**

Cleveland Metroparks is committed to providing equal volunteer opportunities for all individuals. This includes making all reasonable efforts to make volunteer opportunities accessible to individuals with disabilities. An individual with a disability that is experiencing difficulty performing a volunteer assignment should contact the Director of Volunteer Services to discuss the possibility of a reasonable accommodation or reassignment.

## **Religious Accommodation**

Cleveland Metroparks strictly prohibits discrimination on the basis of religion. Cleveland Metroparks provides reasonable accommodation for sincerely held religious beliefs and/or practices unless doing so would impose an undue hardship on the business operations of Cleveland Metroparks.

## **Diversity**

Diversity is the acceptance, appreciation, and inclusion of differences among people to foster an environment where individuals are valued and equal opportunities are created so that all volunteers can reach their potential, maximize their contributions and advance Cleveland Metroparks' mission and level of excellence.

Diversity refers to all the ways that people differ, including differences among people with respect to age, class, gender, ethnicity, race, national origin, mental and physical ability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, military status, veteran status and genetic information.

## **Diversity Core Value**

Cleveland Metroparks embraces a workforce of diverse cultures, physical characteristics and life experiences to better serve the community and believes it is a central component of the "Dignity and Respect" Core Value.

## **Diversity Principle**

The diversity principle of Cleveland Metroparks provides opportunities designed to appeal to a population of more than 100 Cleveland area racial and ethnic backgrounds. The diversity principle reflects a commitment to recognize, value, and includes differences among people and to foster an environment of acceptance of the uniqueness of each person.

## **Volunteer Ethics**

It is the policy of Cleveland Metroparks to carry out its mission in accordance with the strictest ethical guidelines and to ensure that Cleveland Metroparks volunteers conduct themselves in a manner that fosters public confidence in the integrity of Cleveland Metroparks, its processes, and its accomplishments.

Volunteer service with Cleveland Metroparks carries with it a responsibility to act solely in the best interests of the taxpayers of Cuyahoga County and Hinckley Township. Volunteers must refrain from taking part in, or exerting influence over, any transaction in which their own interests may conflict with the best interests of Cleveland Metroparks and/or may create an appearance of impropriety. Volunteers must conduct themselves, at all times, in a manner that avoids favoritism, bias, and the appearance of impropriety.

Volunteers who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination as a Cleveland Metroparks volunteer.

## **Political Activity**

Cleveland Metroparks serves all members of our local community and strives to remain neutral in all partisan political matters. Accordingly, Cleveland Metroparks prohibits volunteers from engaging in any political activity during their volunteer hours at Cleveland Metroparks or from acting in any manner that would tend to indicate that Cleveland Metroparks is endorsing a particular partisan candidate or issue.

# **Section 3: Volunteer Services Department**

## **Mission Statement**

To promote community involvement through rewarding volunteer opportunities that support the needs and mission of Cleveland Metroparks.

## **Philosophy Statement**

Cleveland Metroparks is committed to offering strategies that involve citizens and ensure meaningful and effective engagement of our communities.

## **Definition of Volunteer**

A “volunteer” is an individual who, without compensation or expectation of compensation, performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of Cleveland Metroparks. A “volunteer” must be officially accepted and enrolled by Cleveland Metroparks prior to performance of the volunteer assignments.

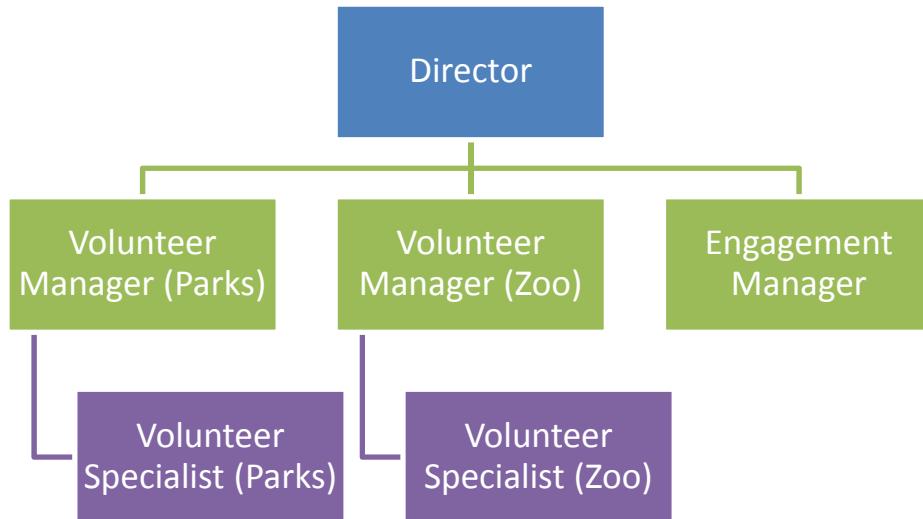
Cleveland Metroparks accepts the service of volunteers aged 16 years and older, although some volunteer activities require a specific participation age. Youth volunteers, 10-15 years, may participate in some volunteer activities when accompanied by an adult parent or guardian as determined on a case-by-case basis and dependent on the scope of the activity.

Cleveland Metroparks goals are best served by the active participation of citizens of the community. To this end, Cleveland Metroparks accepts and encourages the involvement of volunteers at all

levels in the organization and within all appropriate programs and activities. All staff is encouraged to assist in the creation of meaningful and productive roles in which volunteers might serve and to assist in recruitment of volunteers from the community.

## Organization

Volunteer Services operates as a function of the Cleveland Metroparks Human Resources Department. It encompasses all aspects concerning volunteer opportunities and management in Cleveland Metroparks. For general inquiries contact [volinfo@clevelandmetroparks.com](mailto:volinfo@clevelandmetroparks.com).



## Site Volunteer Coordinators

Site Volunteer Coordinators are responsible for the day-to-day supervision of volunteers and their assignments. Each department throughout Cleveland Metroparks has a designated Volunteer Coordinator who works in conjunction with Volunteer Services. The Volunteer Coordinator is the volunteer's first point of contact for assignment-related questions or concerns. The site volunteer coordinator is responsible for assignment training, scheduling, site-specific emergency procedures, communications and recognition.

## Communication

Cleveland Metroparks strives to keep all volunteers fully informed of policy changes, assignment opportunities, benefits and other important information. Cleveland Metroparks utilizes various means of communication, including, but not limited to, e-mail, e-newsletters, and meetings. This includes the online marketing service, *Constant Contact*, to manage online event registrations, invitations, surveys and e-newsletters. Unsubscribing from this service prevents volunteers from receiving essential program information and event invitations.

Effective communication involves a constant dialogue between volunteers and supervisors. Communication should be open and easy. Volunteers are encouraged to speak with their supervisor concerning any complaints or problems that they might have.

## Volunteer Services Newsletter

The *Volunteer Connection* e-newsletter is distributed by Volunteer Services monthly to all volunteers via email. Site volunteer coordinators are also included on the recipient list. This communication piece shares information about organizational updates, new volunteer assignments, recognition information, event registrations, discounts, promotions and other happenings.

## **Site-specific Newsletters**

Departments throughout the Park District and Zoo issue regular newsletters containing information specific to their particular site, such as the Nature Centers, Zoo, and Trail Ambassador Program.

## **Volunteer Management System**

Volunteer Services uses the industry-leading volunteer management software, Volgistics, to manage volunteer information and communicate regularly. In collecting and maintaining volunteers' personal information, Cleveland Metroparks makes every effort to protect volunteer privacy and prevent unnecessary disclosures.

### **Volunteer Profile**

When a volunteer completes the online application, the information populates an account in Volgistics. This account acts as the electronic personnel file for each Cleveland Metroparks volunteer. The account is confidential and will not be shared with anyone outside of the organization. The account will contain the primary volunteer records for each volunteer, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Volunteer application and interview notes
- Profile photo
- Background check and training dates
- Communication history
- Disciplinary action records
- Emergency contact information
- Skills, interests and abilities

It is each volunteer's responsibility to ensure that the personal information in their volunteer account is up-to-date and accurate. Volunteers can update their profile using their Volgistics log-in information.

### **Service Records**

Volunteer service time is tracked in Volgistics either through a Time Clock located at various sites, or via the Time Sheet tab. Each volunteer account displays hours served along with the times and dates of the assignments. These records are then available for review by both staff and volunteers for auditing purposes. Recording service time through Volgistics allows for efficient and accurate reporting on a regular basis.

### **Scheduling**

Volgistics provides centralized scheduling to connect all Cleveland Metroparks volunteers with the various assignments for which they are eligible to volunteer. The system updates in real time, allowing volunteers to see available shifts and opportunities through their Volgistics accounts immediately after inputted by staff. Conversely, the scheduling calendar immediately updates when a volunteer schedules or removes themselves from shifts, preventing double booking of opportunities or immediately opening newly available shifts to other volunteers.

### **Email**

Volgistics provides an efficient and expedient email function to communicate with multiple volunteers and staff. The system allows for multiple sets, groupings, etc., to be selected, then emailed simultaneously. These emails then live on the volunteers' accounts for a set amount of time for ease of retrieval and reference. Volgistics creates an email log located in each volunteers' account for quick verification.

## **Recognition**

By tracking volunteer service as well as volunteer years of active service, Volgistics provides efficient reporting for use in volunteer recognition. Reports may be generated instantly regarding which volunteers achieved milestones in service hours or years of service. Awards are tracked through the volunteers' history for easy reference.

## **Online Volunteer Portal**

Volgistics provides volunteers' access to their accounts from any internet connected device. Volunteers are able to update their personal information, record or view their service time, check available volunteer opportunities and schedule themselves, or read emails through this online portal. The portal also features a landing page containing pertinent information and reference material for volunteers. It allows the volunteers real time access to their account whether they are on a smart phone, personal computer or tablet.

## **Section 4: Volunteer Procedures**

### **Volunteer at Will**

The relationship between volunteers and Cleveland Metroparks is "at will." This means that volunteering with Cleveland Metroparks is a voluntary choice and is subject to termination by the volunteer or Cleveland Metroparks at will, with or without cause, and with or without notice, at any time.

No representative of Cleveland Metroparks has the authority to enter into an agreement with an individual that is contrary to the above statement. Nothing in this Handbook shall be interpreted to be in conflict with, eliminate or modify in any way the volunteer-at-will status of Cleveland Metroparks Volunteers.

### **Volunteer Intake Process**

All prospective volunteers are required to attend a Cleveland Metroparks Volunteer Information Session, then complete an online volunteer application. Each applicant will be interviewed by a Volunteer Services representative. The applicant must pass a background check before being placed into a volunteer assignment. The level of background check is determined by the assignment chosen. Once placed into a volunteer assignment, the site volunteer coordinator will provide job specific information and training for each volunteer.

### **Trial Period**

The first thirty (30) days of volunteer activity, commencing with the volunteer's first assignment or program, are considered a trial period for all volunteers. The organization's progressive discipline program (discussed later in the Handbook) does not apply to volunteers during their trial period. Should staff determine that the volunteer's performance is unsatisfactory at any time during the trial period, a second interview with the volunteer may be conducted. At this point, either the volunteer or staff may request a re-assignment of the volunteer to a different assignment or may determine the volunteer as unsuitable for a volunteer assignment with Cleveland Metroparks.

### **Park Rules**

As a volunteer and representative of Cleveland Metroparks, we ask that volunteers abide by all Park District/Zoo regulations. They are designed for the protection of the natural resources and for the safety and welfare of all guests. Volunteers should familiarize themselves with [Cleveland Metroparks Rules and Regulations](#).

## Employees as Volunteers

Cleveland Metroparks accepts the services of its own staff as volunteers. This service is accepted provided that all of the following conditions are met:

- The activity is outside the scope of normal staff duties and does not take place during the employee's regular working hours or scheduled overtime hours;
- The services are entirely voluntary, with no coercion by Cleveland Metroparks, no promise of advancement, and no penalty for not volunteering;
- The activities are predominantly for the employee's own benefit;
- The employee does not replace another employee or impair the employment opportunities of others by performing work which would otherwise be performed by regular employees
- The employee serves without contemplation of pay; and
- The volunteer time is insubstantial in relation to the employee's regular hours

## Not Eligible for Re-hire

Any employee who is not eligible for re-hire may apply as a volunteer if the reason for ineligibility is not listed in the Employee/Volunteer Handbooks as one for immediate dismissal or disciplinary action. Any other reason for ineligibility will be considered during the volunteer intake process and used in the decision-making process.

## Seasonal Employees

Seasonal employees may not volunteer during their break in service for the position for which they were paid. Following the completion of a seasonal employment term (6 months) if the individual is eligible for re-hire and will NOT be rehired for the same seasonal position, they may begin volunteering as soon as they complete the volunteer intake process and must sign a "seasonal employee to volunteer" acknowledgement form. The seasonal job description will determine the primary duties for which the individual was paid.

## Retired Employees

Retired employees must wait 2 months following their retirement date before beginning any volunteer assignment.

## Relatives as Volunteers

Family members of staff are allowed to volunteer for special events and regular volunteer activities within the organization. For the benefit of the volunteer and their relatives, certain situations require that the volunteer not be placed under the direct supervision or within the same department as other members of their family who are employees. These situations may include instances in which money or merchandise handling is part of the volunteer assignment.

## Episodic Volunteers

Cleveland Metroparks also accepts, as short-term volunteers, businesses and organizations participating in days of service and/or special events, students participating in community service activities and/or service learning projects, and individuals choosing to volunteer on a short-term basis.

Episodic volunteers are required to complete an online waiver and are ineligible to participate in the Volunteer Recognition Program.

## Recording Volunteer Time

Each volunteer is required to record their volunteer time immediately following their service or at the time clock provided at their site location. These hours must either be entered directly into Volgistics or reported to their site volunteer coordinator to enter on their behalf.

Important reasons for maintaining volunteer time records:

- Volunteer hours are tabulated annually for presentation to the Board of Park Commissioners, Chief Executive Officer and Chief Financial Officer, as well as inclusion in the Volunteer Services Annual Report
- Volunteer hours are used in grant proposals to fund Park and Zoo initiatives
- Volunteer hours are used in evaluating specific volunteer programs
- Volunteer hours provide data for annual volunteer recognition
- Volunteer hours provide verification of unpaid work experience that may be helpful when seeking employment and a reference when needed

## Absences/Attendance

In order to provide the best guest service and staff support, all volunteers should arrive on time to start their shifts. Volunteers should call their site volunteer coordinator or other staff member if they will be late or cannot fulfill their volunteer commitment for the day. Continual absenteeism will result in a review of the volunteer's assignment, placement in a different volunteer activity or other appropriate solutions, up to and including dismissal.

## Volunteer Status

### **Active**

Volunteers are considered *Active* if they have successfully completed the intake process. Volunteers remain active as long as they contribute a minimum of 10 volunteer hours per year. Please note certain assignments require additional hours and special training to remain active within that program.

### **Inactive**

Volunteers who have no volunteer activity after one year, will be moved to *Inactive* status. Once inactivated, volunteer information will remain file for two years should the volunteer return to active status. Any volunteer inactive for more than 2 years may be required to reapply.

### **Reassignment**

Volunteers who wish to change volunteer assignments or take on additional assignments must first contact the Volunteer Services Department. If program-specific requirements are not met, potential reassignments may be offered.

### **Leave of Absence**

At the discretion of the site volunteer coordinator, leaves of absence may be granted to volunteers. The following terms/conditions may apply:

If a volunteer needs to stop volunteering for a period of three months or more they must notify their site volunteer coordinator. The volunteer will be placed on a leave of absence for no longer than one (1) year. When away from volunteer duties for an extended amount of time, the same activity may not be available upon return. However, upon return, every effort is made to find a suitable placement. If the volunteer is unable to return to active volunteer duty after one (1) year, they will be made inactive. When a volunteer is ready to return from leave of absence, contact should be made with the site volunteer coordinator to determine if any training or information is necessary.

## **Evaluation**

Site volunteer coordinators are required by Volunteer Services to complete an annual evaluation on each long-term volunteer to ensure performance requirements are being met and volunteers are in the right assignment based on their skills and personal needs.

The coordinator will evaluate each volunteer on their performance, training comprehension, and overall assignment suitability. Should a volunteer receive a poor evaluation, site coordinators or Volunteer Services will contact the volunteer to review standards, suggest changes in work style, recommend additional training and seek suggestions from the volunteer to enhance the volunteer's relationship with Cleveland Metroparks. The conversation will convey appreciation to the volunteer and ascertain the continued interest of the volunteer in serving in that position.

## **Resignation**

Volunteers may resign from their volunteer service with Cleveland Metroparks at any time. It is requested that volunteers who intend to resign do so in writing and provide advance notice of their departure.

## **Exit Interviews**

Whenever possible, exit interviews should be conducted with volunteers who are leaving their positions. The interview should ascertain why the volunteer is leaving the position, suggestions the volunteer may have to improve the assignment, and the possibility of volunteering in another assignment with Cleveland Metroparks in the future. The results of these interviews will be used by volunteer management to assist in ongoing development and improvement of Cleveland Metroparks Volunteer Services.

## **References**

The only information permitted to be included in a volunteer reference is confirmation of volunteer position, training, status and duration of active duty.

# **Section 5: Volunteer Recognition**

Volunteers provide enhanced value to services provided by staff and enable Cleveland Metroparks to provide a level of service and quality that Cleveland Metroparks' guests expect and deserve. Although it is understood that a volunteer's efforts and enthusiasm are given freely, Cleveland Metroparks strives to recognize each volunteer for their time and dedication to the organization.

## **Incentives**

In addition to the enjoyment and satisfaction of contributing to Cleveland Metroparks conservation, education and recreation efforts, volunteers receive the following incentives:

- Awards based on volunteer hours and years of service
- 15% discount at Nature Shops on merchandise and rentals
- Invitation to the annual Summer Volunteer Picnic and other district-wide and site-specific appreciation events
- Continuing education opportunities developed specifically for volunteers
- National Volunteer Week coupons and discounts
- Meet fellow volunteers who share similar interests

## **Volunteer Award Program**

Volunteers are awarded Volunteer Catalog Points (VCP) based on cumulative volunteer hours (the number of hours each volunteer has accumulated since the day they began volunteering with Cleveland Metroparks.)

VCP will be distributed and redeemable at designated times each year. VCP can only be redeemed for items found in the Volunteer Award Catalog which features a variety of volunteer-branded items from clothing to household goods. VCP expire 1 year following the date issued.

Volunteers may supplement their VCP with cash or purchase items from the catalog without using VCP. Each point reduces the item's cost by \$1. All items featured in the catalog may be available in limited quantities and are subject to change.

### **Volunteer Award Levels** (based on cumulative hours)

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| 50 Volunteer Hours =     | 5 VCP   |
| 75 Volunteer Hours =     | 10 VCP  |
| 100 Volunteer Hours =    | 15 VCP  |
| 250 Volunteer Hours =    | 25 VCP  |
| 500 Volunteer Hours =    | 35 VCP  |
| 1,000 Volunteer Hours =  | 50 VCP  |
| 2,500 Volunteer Hours =  | 25 VCP & Sapphire Pin                                     |
| 5,000 Volunteer Hours =  | 50 VCP & Emerald Pin                                      |
| 7,500 Volunteer Hours =  | 75 VCP & Ruby Pin   |
| 10,000 Volunteer Hours = | 100 VCP, Diamond Pin, Board of Commissioner's Recognition |

Due to any unforeseen circumstances, Cleveland Metroparks reserves the right, as it deems appropriate, at any time with or without notice, to terminate or make any changes to volunteer recognition incentives and/or award program.

## **Section 6: Volunteering with Cleveland Metroparks**

### **Standards of Behavior & Volunteer Responsibilities**

Volunteer Standards of Behavior and Responsibilities coincide with Cleveland Metroparks Core Values. These standards shall guide volunteer's behavior during their involvement with Cleveland Metroparks. Just as it is a privilege for Cleveland Metroparks to work with individuals who volunteer their time and energies to the Park District and Zoo, a volunteer's involvement with Cleveland Metroparks is a privilege and a responsibility, not a right.

Cleveland Metroparks volunteers are representatives of the organization and are required to uphold the Volunteer Standards of Behavior and Responsibilities outlined below. Failure to do so may result in corrective action or dismissal from the program.

#### **Guest Focus**

Cleveland Metroparks volunteers will:

- Conduct themselves in a courteous and respectful manner and assist in providing guests with a great experience
- Maintain positive interactions with guests, staff and volunteers. Do not talk negatively or argue with or in front of guests.
- Not allow personal biases to interfere with volunteer performance or interaction with park guests

#### **Dignity & Respect**

Cleveland Metroparks volunteers will:

- Uphold an individual's right to dignity, self-development and self-direction
- Not engage in abusive behaviors that physically or verbally threaten or harm any guest, staff or other volunteer
- Report immediately any threats to the volunteer's emotional or physical well-being

## **Integrity**

Cleveland Metroparks volunteers will:

- Maintain strong moral principles, fairness and honesty
- Not commit a felonious act
- Comply with all civil rights laws and policies
- Use reasonable judgment in making decisions when it appears there is no policy or when a policy has not been communicated to you. As soon as possible consult your site volunteer coordinator for future guidance.

## **Sustainability**

Cleveland Metroparks volunteers will:

- Seek opportunities to incorporate sustainability principles and practices in work/ home life
- Handle animals and operate machinery, vehicles and other equipment only as instructed and in a responsible manner

## **Teamwork**

Cleveland Metroparks volunteers will:

- Accept supervision and support from Cleveland Metroparks staff
- Be considerate. Respect the abilities and opinions of fellow volunteers and staff. Work as a team member with all staff and volunteers.
- Accept the responsibility to represent their program/activity with dignity and pride by being positive and supportive of the organization
- Respect the organizational decisions of Cleveland Metroparks

## **Professionalism**

Cleveland Metroparks volunteers will:

- Respect and adhere to the rules, policies and guidelines established by Cleveland Metroparks and Cleveland Metroparks Volunteer Services
- Perform duties to the best of their abilities in a responsible and timely manner
- Use time wisely and avoid inhibiting the performance of other volunteers and staff

## **Representation of Cleveland Metroparks**

Volunteers are authorized to act as representatives of Cleveland Metroparks as specifically indicated within their volunteer assignments and only to the extent of such written specification. Prior to any action or statement which might affect or obligate Cleveland Metroparks, volunteers should seek prior consultation and approval from the Director of Volunteer Services. These actions may include, but are not limited to, public statements to the press, lobbying efforts with other organizations, collaborations or joint initiatives, creation of social media accounts interpreted as representing Cleveland Metroparks, or any agreements involving contractual or other financial obligations.

## **Personal Appearance and Dress Standards**

All Cleveland Metroparks volunteers are expected to present a professional image to staff, fellow volunteers and guests. Cleveland Metroparks requires volunteers to maintain a neat and clean appearance that is appropriate for the workplace setting and for the activity being performed.

Cleveland Metroparks department managers may determine and enforce guidelines for workplace-appropriate attire and grooming for their areas. Such guidelines may include limitations on natural or artificial scents that could be distracting or annoying to others. Site volunteer coordinators should communicate any department-specific workplace attire and grooming guidelines to volunteers.

Any volunteer who does not meet the attire or grooming standards set by his or her department will be subject to corrective action and may be asked to leave the premises to change clothing.

## **Name Badges**

Volunteers are required to wear their volunteer name badges during their volunteer activity, or other name badge as agreed upon with the site volunteer coordinator. Only Cleveland Metroparks issued name badges may be worn during a volunteer shift.

## **Uniforms**

In assignments where uniforms are required, the cost of the uniform will be at Cleveland Metroparks expense. This will include normal replacement costs. The number of uniforms issued is determined by the applicable program manager.

Volunteers required to wear uniforms are expected to wear them properly and in their entirety. Uniforms must be clean and neatly maintained. Shoes must be in good condition.

Uniforms are to be worn only during a volunteer activity and commuting to and from the volunteer activity where necessary. Uniforms are not to be worn as personal clothing.

Uniform items are required to be returned to the volunteer's immediate supervisor upon the end of the volunteer relationship.

If no uniform is required, volunteers should wear plain clothing, free of offensive or politically biased words or imagery. Cleveland Metroparks logo shirts are preferred.

## **Uniform Accommodation**

Cleveland Metroparks recognizes the importance of individually held religious beliefs to persons within its volunteer corps. Cleveland Metroparks will reasonably accommodate a volunteer's religious beliefs in terms of workplace attire unless the accommodation creates an undue hardship. Accommodation of religious beliefs in terms of attire may be difficult in light of safety issues for volunteers. Those requesting a workplace attire accommodation based on religious beliefs should be referred to the Director of Volunteer Services.

## **Cell Phones & Electronic Devices**

The use of personal communication devices such as cellular phones or other electronic communication devices is restricted during most volunteer activity. Unless otherwise authorized, volunteers should only use communication devices for personal use during breaks, lunch or in the case of an emergency. Cellular phones or other electronic devices provided by Cleveland Metroparks should be used for business purposes only.

Volunteers assigned to specific positions that require direct interaction with guests to the Park District/Zoo are prohibited from using a cellular phone or any other electronic communication device while such interaction is taking place.

Cleveland Metroparks shall not be held liable for the loss or damage of personal cellular phones or other electronic devices brought during volunteer activity.

## **Recordings/Photographs**

Due to the potential for issues such as invasion of privacy, sexual or other harassment, protection of confidential information, volunteers may not take, distribute, or post pictures, videos, or audio recordings during their volunteer shift without receiving permission from Park District/Zoo Management.

## Computers, Internet, Email & Social Media

Cleveland Metroparks may provide volunteers with access to personal computers or tablets when a need for such equipment is required by their volunteer assignment and has been established by their supervisor and department manager. The Park District/Zoo will also provide certain third-party software for such computers as the need arises. Such software is purchased for Park District/Zoo use only and is not to be duplicated unless provided for in the license agreement. Software is not to be used or copied without the expressed written consent of Cleveland Metroparks. Internet and email is to be used for volunteer-related purposes only, and the volunteer does not have any personal privacy rights regarding use of Cleveland Metroparks information systems and technology. A volunteer's use of Cleveland Metroparks information systems and technology constitutes acknowledgement that the volunteer understands and consents to Cleveland Metroparks right to inspect and audit all such use. Unauthorized copying or use of improperly licensed software is usually a violation of Federal copyright law.

### **Computers**

Volunteers may only use Cleveland Metroparks computer systems (including all related peripheral equipment, network and network devices, i.e., internet access) for the following acceptable uses:

- Activities facilitating Cleveland Metroparks mission and values
- Research supporting programs sponsored by Cleveland Metroparks
- Communications between Cleveland Metroparks volunteers, employees and others outside the Park District/Zoo

Users may not use Cleveland Metroparks computer systems for unacceptable uses specifically including, but not limited to, the following:

- Infringing on the rights or liberties of others
- Illegal or criminal use of any kind
- Utilization involving communications, materials, information, data or images (including email) regarded as obscene, pornographic, threatening, abusive, harassing, sexually explicit, derogatory, discriminatory, or in violation or inconsistent with any other Cleveland Metroparks policy
- Accessing, viewing, printing, storing, transmitting, disseminating or selling any information in violation of law, privilege or an expectation of privacy
- Causing or permitting materials protected by copyright, trademark, service mark, trade name, trade secret, confidentiality or proprietary data, or communications of another, to be uploaded or downloaded to a computer or information system, published, broadcast, or in any way disseminated without authorization from the owner
- Damaging or altering the operation, function, content or design of Cleveland Metroparks information technology system including all hardware and software
- Granting access to Cleveland Metroparks information technology hardware and software to individuals not authorized by Cleveland Metroparks either by intentional conduct such as disclosing passwords, or by unintentional conduct such as failing to log off
- Commercial, profit-motivated, or partisan political use not related to Cleveland Metroparks programs

### **Internet**

On-line services and internet service providers provide access to countless computer networks, some of which contain material which may be deemed offensive or inappropriate. Cleveland Metroparks prohibits accessing offensive or inappropriate materials and transmitting such materials to others. The Information Systems Division records all internet sites visited by Cleveland Metroparks computers and monitors the resulting logs for inappropriate use.

Unauthorized or inappropriate use may result in termination of the volunteer from Cleveland Metroparks.

Cleveland Metroparks retains the right to monitor and control any and all usage of its information technology hardware and software. This right explicitly includes the right to read electronic communications, if any.

## **Email**

Fair and courteous use of electronic email is expected of all Cleveland Metroparks volunteers. Cleveland Metroparks reserves the right to monitor communications received and sent on the internal e-mail system as well as on the internet. By using these forms of communication, the volunteer consents to monitoring by Cleveland Metroparks, and waives any right to or expectation of privacy in use of Cleveland Metroparks communications system.

## **Social Media**

The term “social media” means various forms of discussion and information sharing including social networks, blogs, video sharing, podcasts, wikis, message boards, and online forums. Examples of social media applications include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Wikipedia, YouTube, Flickr, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

The Chief Marketing Officer is responsible for all communication on behalf of Cleveland Metroparks. Volunteers who want to utilize social media in any form of representation for Cleveland Metroparks must secure prior approval from the Director of Volunteer Services and the Marketing Department.

Volunteers who post on social media in their personal capacity should ensure that it is clear that all opinions or views expressed are their own and not the position of Cleveland Metroparks.

Misuse or unauthorized disclosure of confidential information not otherwise available to persons outside Cleveland Metroparks is cause for disciplinary action, up to and including removal from their volunteer assignment.

## **Confidentiality**

Volunteers shall not disclose or use at any point during their lifetime any information acquired during their volunteer service that is considered confidential. Information is considered confidential if Ohio law designates it as such, under the circumstances it has been made confidential, or preserving the confidentiality of the information is necessary for government to function properly.

This includes any information that involves a single member of the staff, volunteer, client or other person, or the overall operations of Cleveland Metroparks.

## **Volunteers Working with Minors**

Volunteers are strictly prohibited from having unsupervised access to minors on a regular basis. Unsupervised access to a minor means that the volunteer has access to and that either of the following applies:

- No other person 18 years of age or older is present in the same room with the child; or
- If outdoors, no other person 18 years of age or older is within a 30-yard radius of the minor or has visual contact with the minor.

Accordingly, volunteers are only permitted have unsupervised access to a minor in emergency situations (e.g., medical emergency, other safety emergency). Volunteers must ensure that they are always with a Metroparks employee or other volunteer age 18 or older when working with minors.

In addition, volunteers are required to adhere to the following requirements when working with minors:

- Do not show favoritism among minors in a group. Treat all equally and show the same level of attention to all within the group.
- Volunteers may not touch minors, with the exception of allowing their hand to be held if the minor initiates the contact. Volunteers may not initiate contact.
- Under no circumstances will volunteers pick up, carry, boost, hold, place, or allow a minor to sit on their lap, give piggy back rides, assist in dressing or undressing, engage in physical horseplay, or in any other way make physical contact with a minor.
- Volunteers may not give personal information (i.e. phone number, address, email) to any minor; volunteers may not accept personal information from minors.
- Volunteers may not have contact with minor program participants outside of the program environment.
- If you believe someone has perpetrated abuse or neglect, immediately and confidentially report such violation to a Cleveland Metroparks employee or Ranger.

## Children & Pets in the Workplace

Volunteer assignments require full attention by a volunteer; therefore, it is prohibited for volunteers to bring children or pets to their volunteer activity unless specified by the program.

## Vehicles, Tools & Other Property

### Vehicle Use

Volunteers, 18 years of age or older, may be asked to operate a Cleveland Metroparks vehicle (including golf or similar carts) while in the course and scope of their assigned duties and with the approval and direction of an authorized Cleveland Metroparks employee. Volunteers who operate any motor vehicle during their volunteer service shall operate the vehicle in a safe and courteous manner. This includes obeying all federal, state, and local laws pertaining to the operation of motor vehicles.

Volunteers must:

- Possess and provide a copy of a valid Ohio drivers' license, with less than 9 points charged against their cumulative driving record;
- Submit to an annual Motor Vehicle Report;
- Operate the vehicle safely and according to traffic laws;
- Wear a seat belt; and
- Do not engage in distracted behavior, including using a cellular device (except with hands-free equipment) while operating a vehicle

Volunteers must immediately notify the Director of Volunteer Services when their driving record point total equals six or more points and/or the volunteer receives a suspension of license. This includes the immediate reporting to the Director of Volunteer Services of any arrest for operating a vehicle under the influence of alcohol/drugs.

Cleveland Metroparks policy covers volunteers while they are operating vehicles owned by Cleveland Metroparks. Cleveland Metroparks' auto liability insurance acts as secondary insurance for those volunteers driving their personal vehicle as an essential function. Situations, such as driving personal vehicles to or from volunteer activities, are not covered by Cleveland Metroparks automobile insurance policy.

Volunteers who are cited for violation of traffic/parking laws during their volunteer service are responsible for paying any fines associated with the citation in addition to being subject to disciplinary action.

Volunteers are prohibited from utilizing a Cleveland Metroparks vehicle for personal purposes.

Volunteers who utilize a personal vehicle in the course and scope of their assigned duties must adhere to the following conditions:

- The volunteer must maintain auto insurance with liability limits of not less than \$50,000 per occurrence
- The personal vehicle's automobile registration must be current
- The volunteer must maintain the vehicle in good and safe operating condition

## **Vehicle Incident/Accident Reporting**

A vehicle "incident" involves a small scrape or dent resulting from contact between a Cleveland Metroparks vehicle and Cleveland Metroparks property/vehicle. Generally, the vehicle will not need to be repaired after the incident. A volunteer involved in a vehicle "incident" must contact their direct supervisor immediately.

A vehicle "accident" involves any contact between a Cleveland Metroparks vehicle and non-Cleveland Metroparks property, or an "incident" that results in any injuries or significant property damage. Volunteers involved in an "accident" must contact the Ranger Department to file a report in addition to adhere to the "incident" reporting procedure above.

## **Tools and Other Property**

Volunteers are responsible for the proper care of tools and other property assigned to them when participating in volunteer activities for Cleveland Metroparks. Volunteers are responsible for any loss or damage to Cleveland Metroparks equipment that results from the volunteer's negligence.

Cleveland Metroparks tools and other property may not be used for personal use by volunteers. Examples of prohibited use include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Borrowing of hand tools, power tools, chainsaws, etc.
- Using the car hoist or automotive servicing facilities
- Making paper copies
- Using telephones, cellular phones, FAX, computers, computer printer, copier, etc.

Disciplinary action and reimbursement may be pursued for misuse or abuse of property, vehicles, or tools.

## **Arrest and/or Conviction of Volunteers**

Any volunteer who is arrested or convicted of a misdemeanor or felony while volunteering at Cleveland Metroparks must immediately report the arrest or conviction to the Director of Volunteer Services. Failure to report an arrest or conviction will subject a volunteer to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of volunteer service.

## **Arrests**

The arrest of any volunteer – whether on or off Park District/Zoo grounds – may result in corrective action by Cleveland Metroparks. Corrective action depends upon a review of all factors involved in the arrest. These factors may include, but are not limited to, the following concerns:

- Consideration of the weight of the evidence as to whether the activity underlying the arrest actually occurred
- Determination of whether or not the volunteer's action was organization-related
- Consideration of the nature and severity of the activity

- Determination of whether or not the circumstances resulting from the act will adversely affect a volunteer's status

## **Convictions**

A volunteer who is convicted of a criminal offense while volunteering with Cleveland Metroparks will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of volunteer service. The level of disciplinary action will depend upon the nature of the offense and the volunteer's assignment description.

## **Dispute Resolution Process/Grievances**

Cleveland Metroparks strives to create a positive climate for personal and professional growth for its volunteers. However, in the event that you have a dispute and have attempted to communicate directly with the person involved, the following steps have been created to assist with additional communication in resolving a problem. They are designed to direct you efficiently and effectively through the appropriate personnel. Please remember to report any dispute in a timely manner to your site volunteer coordinator so the issue may be addressed before further complications occur:

**Step 1:** Discuss the problem with the person involved with the intent to find a solution.

**Step 2:** If you feel you need additional communication or action, discuss the problem with the site volunteer coordinator.

**Step 3:** If the issue needs further attention, set an appointment with the Director of Volunteer Services and site volunteer coordinator to discuss the issue.

**Step 4:** In the event that the incident cannot be resolved at the site of volunteering and all of the preceding steps have occurred, a meeting may be scheduled with the site volunteer coordinator, Director of Volunteer Services and Chief Human Resources Officer.

## **Corrective Action Process**

As noted earlier, the relationship between volunteers and Cleveland Metroparks is "at will." This means that volunteer service with Cleveland Metroparks is a voluntary one and is subject to termination by the volunteer or Cleveland Metroparks at will, with or without cause, and with or without notice, at any time.

Each volunteer is expected to contribute in a professional manner, obey rules, share knowledge with others and be a team player. All volunteers are subject to disciplinary action ranging from a trial period to immediate termination. Rule violations and volunteer actions detrimental to the best interest of Cleveland Metroparks will result in disciplinary actions up to and including discharge. When infractions occur, the site volunteer coordinator and/or Director of Volunteer Services may use the corrective action process. A corrective action form may also be used to document volunteer performance.

Cleveland Metroparks will generally use the following progressive corrective action process to address such minor deficiencies in conduct (corrective action may be escalated depending on the severity of the deficient conduct):

- A first offense is addressed with a verbal warning
- A second offense is addressed with a final written warning
- A third offense will result in termination of volunteer service

Cleveland Metroparks recognizes that it generally benefits the organization if a volunteer is given the opportunity to correct minor deficient conduct in certain circumstances, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Excessive absenteeism, tardiness, or break time

- Failure to adhere to timekeeping policies
- Minor negligent safety violations
- Minor violations of motor vehicle policy (e.g., seat belt violation, distracted driving)
- Minor negligent vehicle incident or accident
- Violation of personal appearance and dress standards policy
- Minor negligent damage to Cleveland Metroparks property, including to properly operate or maintain equipment, failure to keep equipment in clean and good repair, or failure to maintain storage areas in a clean and orderly manner
- Excessive personal usage of information technology systems
- Failure to attend mandatory training
- Minor social medial policy violation
- Minor failure to act in a professional manner (e.g., horseplay, practical jokes)
- Minor failure to adhere to Cleveland Metroparks policy, procedure or statement
- Minor failure to provide excellent customer service
- Smoking in unauthorized areas

Certain egregious conduct cannot be tolerated even if committed only one time. Accordingly, a volunteer who exhibits such conduct will be subject to immediate discharge. The following is a non-exhaustive list of examples of conduct that will generally result in immediate discharge:

- Gross neglect of duty or failure to adequately perform volunteer duties
- Violation of the non-discrimination, workplace harassment, ethics, workplace violence, and/or anti-bullying policies
- Verbal abuse or profanity directed at a co-worker (volunteer or staff) or the public
- Malicious destruction of public records or other violation of public records policy
- Violation of drug/alcohol free policy
- Failure to report a criminal arrest or conviction
- Conviction of a felony
- Committing a criminal act (conviction not necessary depending on facts and circumstances) that has a direct nexus to the volunteer's service with Cleveland Metroparks
- Dishonesty of any kind
- Falsification (whether by commission or omission) of any Cleveland Metroparks record, including, but not limited to, timekeeping/attendance records, volunteer application
- Committing any act of fraud
- Unauthorized release of confidential information
- Major and/or reckless or intentional safety violations
- Major violations of motor vehicle policy (e.g., personal use of Park District Vehicle)
- Major and/or reckless or intentional vehicle accident
- Failure to report a vehicle incident or accident
- Major and/or reckless or intentional damage to Cleveland Metroparks property
- Theft of Cleveland Metroparks, co-workers, volunteers or customer property
- Representing oneself as an official representative of Cleveland Metroparks to the public and/or media without authorization
- Violation of volunteer recording/photograph policy
- Major failure to adhere to Cleveland Metroparks policy, procedure or statement
- Sleeping during a volunteer shift/activity
- Major failure to provide excellent customer service (e.g., profanity directed at public, excessive rudeness)

## Section 7: Volunteer Well-Being

### Anti-Bullying Policy

In accordance with the core values of teamwork, dignity, and respect, Cleveland Metroparks considers workplace bullying unacceptable and will not tolerate it under any circumstances. Bullying consists of persistent, malicious, unwelcome, severe and pervasive mistreatment that harms, intimidates, offends, degrades or humiliates an individual, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, at the place of volunteering and/or in the course of volunteer service.

Cleveland Metroparks promotes a healthy workplace culture where all volunteers are able to work in an environment free of bullying behavior. Cleveland Metroparks encourages all volunteers to report any instance of bullying behavior to the Director of Volunteer Services. Any reports of this type will be treated seriously, investigated promptly and impartially. Cleveland Metroparks will safeguard a volunteer who reports bullying conduct from retaliation or reprisal.

Any volunteer found in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of volunteer service.

### Workplace Safety

Cleveland Metroparks is committed to providing a safe working environment through a cooperative involvement among all employees and volunteers. Reasonable measures will be taken to prevent and eliminate unsafe conditions, hazards, and practices that create an environment where there is potential for an accident to occur.

### Volunteer Responsibilities

Volunteers should respond to potentially unsafe situations by taking such corrective actions as they are capable of, within the limits of their jobs, and by promptly notifying appropriate supervisory personnel. Cleveland Metroparks Rangers should be promptly notified when public safety concerns, serious violations of rules and regulations, or disruptive behavior exceeds the supervisory personnel's capabilities or limitations of their jobs. Rangers should also be promptly notified when a discovery is made of evidence of crime, contraband or a spill or release of a hazardous material.

### Public Safety & Law Enforcement

Volunteers who observe or are made aware of serious violations of Cleveland Metroparks rules and regulations or Ohio Laws should report the violation to the Ranger Department immediately. Volunteers are encouraged to call from a safe location and to remain in the area, maintaining a safe distance, in case rangers have further questions or need assistance. Volunteers are reminded to contact a supervisor as well and to avoid conflict at the scene.

### Emergency Situations

If a situation arises where emergency medical assistance (ambulance/fire truck) is needed in the park, volunteers are required to dial 9-1-1. Report to the operator the nature of the emergency and the exact location. After calling 9-1-1, volunteers should immediately notify Cleveland Metroparks Ranger Headquarters at 440-333-4911 (emergency) and also notify your supervisor or other staff member of the same information. For non-emergency questions or information, please contact Cleveland Metroparks Rangers at 440-331-5530.

### Emergency Action Plan

An Emergency Action Plan has been designed to provide guidance to volunteers and employees in dealing with workplace emergencies when conditions dictate the evacuation of, or shelter within their

facility or building Emergency Action Plans for each building/facility are physically located within each building/facility. It is important that each volunteer is aware of the proper designated safe locations in the event of an emergency.

## **Volunteer Injuries**

Any volunteer who sustains an injury or illness while performing their volunteer assignment that requires urgent medical attention should immediately seek emergency medical treatment before following the workplace injury/illness reporting process. All other volunteer work-related injuries or illnesses should be reported in the following manner:

- The volunteer should immediately notify their site coordinator of the injury/illness.
- The site coordinator will contact the Ranger Dept to fill out an incident report.

While volunteers serve without compensation, Cleveland Metroparks seeks to ensure that volunteers are not economically burdened as a result of injuries that result from the performance of volunteer duties for the Park District. Volunteer injuries will be addressed by the Park District's Risk Management Division. Any associated out-of-pocket medical costs, will be reported to the Director of Risk Management for review and consideration on a case-by-case basis.

## **Liability Insurance**

Volunteers are provided certain liability insurance coverage in case a third party presents a claim or files a lawsuit against the volunteer. This coverage is available if the matter arises out of the volunteers' service while in the course and scope of their duties (as written in the position description) and while under the supervision of an authorized Cleveland Metroparks employee. As with all insurance coverage, certain activities and circumstances are not covered by these policies. Questions about coverage should be directed to Cleveland Metroparks Risk Management Department.

## **Prevention of Workplace Violence**

Cleveland Metroparks is committed to providing a safe and harmonious environment for all of its employees, volunteers, vendors and guests. Any behavior that is violent, threatening or intimidating will not be tolerated. Conduct that causes harm to or threatens the safety or the "perceived" safety of an employee, volunteer, vendor or guest, is strictly prohibited. Violators will suffer appropriate criminal or other consequences for violent, threatening or intimidating acts.

Violent actions and threatening behavior may be defined as, but not limited to:

- Physical attacks (e.g. hitting, pushing or more serious forms of battery)
- Direct or indirect threats, verbal, written or physical
- Harassing behavior or communication that may menace or frighten
- Deliberate destruction of someone's personal property or the Park District's property

An act of violence or threatening behavior, and all threats of violence, whether observed or experienced, shall be immediately reported to the Ranger Department. All suspicious individuals or activities should also be reported immediately. Do not place yourself in peril. Volunteers are encouraged to call from a safe location and to remain in the area, maintaining a safe distance, in case Rangers have further questions. Volunteers are reminded to contact a supervisor as well and to avoid conflict at the scene. Volunteers should call 911 immediately to report fires or medical injuries associated with these incidents.

## **Drug and Alcohol-Free Workplace**

Cleveland Metroparks is committed to protecting the safety, health and well-being of all volunteers in our workplace. Alcohol abuse and drug use pose a significant threat to this goal. Cleveland Metroparks has a zero-tolerance drug and alcohol-free workplace policy.

It is a violation to be under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or intoxicants while volunteering for Cleveland Metroparks. If volunteers are suspected of being under the influence while volunteering, the Director of Volunteer service has discretion to request an on-site drug and alcohol screen.

## **Smoke-Free Workplace**

In accordance with the Ohio Clean Indoor Air Law, volunteers are not permitted to smoke in any enclosed area under the direct or indirect control of Cleveland Metroparks. Restricted areas include, but are not limited to, offices, meeting rooms, storage areas, restrooms, stairways, hallways, warehouses, garages, stables, shelters, holding areas, and vehicles. Cleveland Metroparks is also responsible for ensuring that tobacco smoke does not enter restricted areas thorough entrances, windows or ventilation systems.

Smoking is permitted only in designated smoking areas. Further, smoking shall be out of public view which includes, but is not limited to public areas, during programs, demonstrations, or when in contact with a Park District/Zoo guest.

## **Firearm/Weapon Policy**

Volunteers are strictly prohibited from carrying a firearm or any other weapon during any volunteer activity. This includes volunteers who have a valid concealed handgun license. Volunteers who have a valid concealed handgun license and transport their handgun in their personal vehicle to and from their volunteer activity must comply with the provisions of [Section 2923.1210](#) of the Ohio Revised Code. Accordingly, each firearm and all of the ammunition must remain inside the person's privately owned motor vehicle while the person is physically present inside the motor vehicle, or each firearm and all of the ammunition must be locked within the trunk, glove box, or other enclosed compartment or container within or on the person's privately owned motor vehicle.

The State of Ohio "concealed weapon carry" legislation became effective April 8, 2004. Such legislation allows concealed weapons to be prohibited from government-owned facilities. The legislation, however, does not include public parks in the list of "prohibited places" where concealed weapons may be banned. Therefore, Cleveland Metroparks is presently limited to banning the public from bringing weapons into its buildings. Volunteers who perceive any threat, though, should immediately contact the Ranger dispatch center at 440-333-4911.