

Hesperia Recreation and Park District

# Volunteer Park Ranger

# Policy Manual



Revised 11/5/2021

## **ROLE OF A VOLUNTEER PARK RANGER**

Hesperia parks are vital for recreation and greenspace, and have a fascinating history. This is an exciting opportunity for anyone wanting to develop their public engagement skills, “give something back,” or contribute to the protection of our community parks and facilities.

Volunteer Park Rangers will carry out duties of education and public safety that do not require a Park Ranger. Those duties may include but are not limited to providing public assistance, provide reports on activities within the parks, report or correct hazards that could endanger the public, provide traffic or crowd control, , assist Park Rangers as necessary, and report suspicious activities to the proper authority.

Volunteer Park Rangers will be a liaison with the public on the use of park facilities and equipment, provide information on resources that are available within the District, and perform other duties as designated to enhance public safety and ensure quality recreational time for all who use park facilities.

Volunteer Park Rangers will serve as civilian volunteers of the District without peace officer powers, under the direction of District personnel who, of his or her own free will and without compensation or financial gain, contributes services to assist the District in the accomplishment of its mission.

Personal attributes of a Volunteer Park Ranger include:

- Friendly, approachable, and enthusiastic – they have the potential to be one of the key representatives of the parks.
- Confident communication skills with the ability to provide an excellent level of customer engagement.
- Passion for recreation and parks with a desire to share this with others.
- Knowledge of the parks or a willingness to learn.
- Calm and practical in unexpected situations with good common sense.
- Ability to undertake activities in the outdoors and in all weathers.
- Reliable and able to commit to the expected number of sessions.
- Able to work alongside a range of people.

Benefits to Volunteer Park Rangers include:

- Further develop public and community engagement skills.
- Gain experience in a public facing role in important sites for the community.
- Give back to the community and connect them with the park and facilities’ shared experiences.
- Spend time outdoors.
- Help to protect the Parks’ natural environment for future generations.

- Varied, flexible, and interesting role.
- Join a great team of Park Rangers, District employees, and volunteers!

## **RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCEDURES**

Recruitment for Volunteer Park Rangers will be conducted at various intervals on an as-needed basis. Each applicant shall complete an application package to receive consideration.

Applicants for the position of Volunteer Park Ranger must meet the following minimum requirements.

1. Be 18 years of age or older at the time of appointment.
2. Be of good moral habits/character with no arrest or convictions record.
3. No pending misdemeanor or felony court cases.
4. Be a citizen of the United States or permanent resident alien who is eligible and/or applied for citizenship.
5. Be a high school graduate or possess a G.E.D.
6. Possess a valid California Class C driver's license.
7. Pass an oral interview or group interview.
8. Undergo and clear fingerprinting and a background check.
9. Hold a current First Aid/CPR card, preferred.
11. Meet any other prescribed training requirements as set forth by District policy and procedure.

It is expected that all volunteers dedicate at least eight hours a month for at least one year. Most volunteers maintain a weekly or bi-weekly scheduled of four hours per shift.

## ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

All accepted volunteers must complete orientation and training to learn the natural and cultural history of the parks and facilities, proper interpretations, and visitor interaction techniques.

### HRPD Mission:

To make life better and enrich the quality of life for our community by providing a variety of leisure time land recreation activities, parks, and facilities that promote health and wellness, learning, and fun.

### HRPD Vision:

To serve our community and be recognized as a quality recreation and park district we must:

- Be financially stable and sustainable.
- Be the leisure time and recreational activities provider of choice in the Victor Valley.
- Distinguish HRPD as a major partner with other agencies and organizations for recreation, park, and open space needs.
- Be an employer of choice.
- Be the best part of our patron's day by demonstrating excellent customer service that exceeds expectations.
- Evolve with emerging opportunities, while maintaining our existing facilities and infrastructure.
- Actively market, promote, inform, and educate our residents about the many benefits of recreation, parks, and open space.

*As a valuable asset, the District expresses gratitude for individuals being willing to contribute time and effort as a Volunteer Park Ranger to further our mission and vision.*

## UNIFORMS

Volunteer Park Rangers shall wear the approved District uniform at all times while performing their official duties. General Manager must authorize any deviation from this policy.

Uniforms shall **not** be worn at any time other than for official duty assignments.

Articles of personal clothing are not to be worn with the uniform with the exception of a clean white t-shirt. Uniforms must be clean and neatly pressed at the start of a shift.

Park Rangers and Volunteer Park Rangers must be neatly groomed at all times.

The District will furnish each Volunteer Park Ranger with the following uniform equipment:

1. (1) forest green polo shirt
2. (1) pair of forest green pants
3. (1) name tag
4. An identification card

Volunteer Park Rangers must supply their own black boots or shoes, black basket weave waist belt, flashlight holder, and flashlight.

The General Manager must approve the style and use of duty jackets, rain gear, helmets, or any other item of uniform dress.

Volunteer Park Rangers may carry keys to District property, gates, vehicles, and other equipment necessary to perform their duties. Keys shall be safeguarded at all times and personnel who carry District keys shall never reveal to anyone other than to another District employee the location where they are used or what they lock or unlock. District personnel are not authorized to duplicate keys. The loss of any key(s) shall be reported to the Senior Park Ranger immediately and a written report submitted within 24 hours.

## **VOLUNTEERING CONDITIONS**

### Environmental Conditions:

Field environment in a variety of inclement weather conditions ranging from: heat, cold, rain, sleet, snow, lightening; travel from site to site; exposure to smoke, wind, dust, pollen, stinging insects; volunteer around uneven surfaces.

### Physical Conditions:

Essential and marginal functions may require maintaining physical condition necessary for running, kneeling, bending, stooping and lifting; sitting, standing or walking for prolonged periods of time; use of hands to handle, finger or feel objects, tools, write reports and operate motorized vehicles.

## **CHAIN OF COMMAND**

Volunteer Park Rangers are to follow the chain of command for direction, reports, incidents, questions, and/or concerns. They report directly to the supervising Park

Ranger on duty. The chain of command flows up as follows: Park Ranger on duty, Senior Park Ranger, and General Manager. When in doubt, they should contact their superior, then move up the chain of command for direction.

## **VOLUNTEER HOUR TRACKING**

All time on duty as a Volunteer Park Ranger must be tracked on a Volunteer Hour Tracking Log.

## **INTERACTION WITH THE PUBLIC**

While performing any of the above duties, volunteers must be aware that he/she is acting as a representative of the Hesperia Recreation and Park District and must be public relations conscious.

1. Be friendly.
2. Greet the public with confidence and eye contact. A general positive attitude builds rapport and trust.
3. Treat each individual utilizing the parks and facilities with respect.

## **PARK RULES, ORDINANCES, & DISTRICT POLICY & OPERATIONS MANUAL**

It is important that a Volunteer Park Ranger familiarize themselves with the Hesperia Recreation and Park District Park Rules and Ordinances. Park Rules are posted at each park and can be accessed online at <https://www.hesperiaparks.com/rules-and-regulations>. Park Rules may be specific to a park where certain amenities are offered, i.e. Fishing, Camping, and Equestrian Arena Rules are specific to Hesperia Lake Park.

When questions arise regarding District policy, volunteers are to contact their superior. The HRPD Policy Manual of Organization and Operation is available online at <https://www.hesperiaparks.com/policy>.

## **FIRST AID, MEDICAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE**

First Aid & CPR is strongly preferred for a Volunteer Park Ranger. Only basic First Aid & CPR, under the scope of the certification, is to be applied. Any medical emergency response needed beyond the scope should be reported to 911. Report any medical

emergency to the Senior Park Ranger immediately after the incident or when it is safe to do so.

## **USE OF DISTRICT VS. PERSONAL PROPERTY**

Volunteer Park Rangers are discouraged from using personal property or equipment while conducting District business. Should any personal property such as vehicles, computers, binoculars, cameras, or flashlights be lost, damaged, or stolen while being used on District business, the District cannot be held liable.

Volunteer Park Rangers shall not borrow District equipment for personal use. Such unauthorized use of District-owned equipment may result in a volunteer's termination.

## **REPORTING ON VISITOR CONTACTS, CONDITIONS, HAZARDS**

(List the way they are to fill out any reports.)

Report all accidents and injuries as soon as possible, no later than 48 hours of the incident. Use the Incident Report form available at all District facilities to investigate and thoroughly describe the circumstances, including injured party information, property damage/loss information, and witness information.

## **INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND SOCIAL MEDIA**

Generally, the District owns the intellectual property rights to works created by its employees, volunteers, contractors, and cooperating associations within the scope of their employment, agreement, or contract. Artwork, logos, publications, and educational program materials are among the diverse range of affected works.

It is the intent of the District to protect intellectual property against unauthorized or inappropriate use, whether intentional or unintentional, by individuals or organizations, to the extent practicable.

Volunteers seeking to retain rights to intellectual property created on their own time, using their own equipment, and requiring no special access to locations, resources, or facilities, must follow all rules and regulations required of any member of the general public.

Use of the District logo is restricted to District publications and activities, unless otherwise agreed. The logo may be used on volunteer clothing provided. The logo

shall not be used in a manner determined by the District in its sole discretion to be misleading, defamatory, infringing, libelous, disparaging, obscene, or otherwise objectionable. The components of the logo may not be altered or used separately.

#### Social Media:

In the environment of instantaneous and far-reaching communication it is critical that Hesperia Recreation and Park District volunteers, as other District representatives, maintain a consistent image and conduct themselves online in the same professional manner they do in person. Statements should be avoided that can be interpreted as official positions, comments, or offers of the District when, in fact, they are personal opinions.

### **SEPARATION**

Either the District or the Park Ranger Volunteer may terminate the Volunteer Service Agreement at any time and without cause. The District is not required to accept or retain any person who volunteers their services. It remains both the prerogative and the responsibility of the Senior Park Ranger to determine whether a specific volunteer is appropriate for the needs and requirements of the District. If necessary, the Senior Park Ranger can terminate the agreement if the volunteer repeatedly fails to fulfill his or her responsibilities as specified in Volunteer Park Ranger policy, if he/she violates District policies related to discrimination or harassment, or if he/she is not performing satisfactorily.

### **VOLUNTEER SERVICE AGREEMENT**

By accepting the role of the Volunteer Park Ranger, the following is agreed to:

1. The role is mutually acceptable and may be cancelled at any time, with or without cause.
2. Workers' compensation insurance coverage will be provided for injuries sustained in the scope of the volunteer's assigned duties.
3. Tort liability issues will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.
4. Intellectual property created by a volunteer while acting as a District volunteer will belong to the District.
5. The volunteer grants the District the unrestricted right to copyright photographs taken of the volunteer while he/she is in service to the District.

6. Expense reimbursement by the District will be authorized only when approved in advance by the designated District representative.
7. Volunteer agrees to track all volunteer time on a Volunteer Hour Tracking Form.
8. Volunteers are not considered employees within the legal meaning of the term and do not have the same rights as employees.