




PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Subject	Handling Disruptive or Unsafe Behavior of Youth in Programs or Facilities	Reference Number PR-S-009
Section	Safety	Effective Date 09/10/2013
Applicability	All Parks and Recreation Department Personnel	Supersedes Policy Dated
Director Approval		Signature Date 8/21/13

Purpose: To establish Department action in managing situations where disruptive or unsafe behavior is displayed by youth participants during program hours.

Authority: City of Austin Code §8-1-11

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Texas State Minimum Standards for Child-Care Center Discipline and Guidance, December 2010, Stock Code P20330-0000

City of Austin Local Standards of Care for the City Parks and Recreation Youth Recreation Programs Ordinance 20120426-123

The Director has the authority and responsibility of maintaining efficiency within the operation and determining the methods to accomplish the department mission and objectives.

Policy: It is the policy of the Parks and Recreation Department to provide youth program participants a safe and hostile free environment during their participation in a Parks and Recreation Department led programs.

Definitions: **Youth:** Individuals ages 5-17

Parks and Recreation Department led program: any activity in which a Parks and Recreation Department employee is responsible for participant safety.

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Disruptive Behavior: any conduct that interrupts or disturbs a Parks and Recreation Department service or program.

Unsafe Behavior: any action that causes bodily injury to another or damage to property or that poses a risk that the bodily injury or damage to property is reasonably likely to occur.

Procedures:

This policy is designed to provide guidance as to handling youth disruptive unsafe behavior displayed during a Parks and Recreation Department lead program or service. Guidance of youth must be consistent and based on an understanding of program and individual needs.

For the safety and consideration of all patrons, the Parks and Recreation Department expects youth program participants to follow program rules and respect other participants, staff and property.

When using any behavior management methods staff will observe the following:

- There will be no harsh, cruel, corporal, or humiliating punishment.
- Staff will refrain from using abusive or profane language.
- Staff will not physically contain a youth or place youth in a locked unsupervised room.
- Staff will use brief supervised separation from the group if necessary.

For any youth program participant who demonstrates disruptive behavior or does not adhere to facility or program rules, the following procedure will be observed by staff:

1. The disruptive youth participant shall be given verbal warnings by staff and the staff will document the warning and the nature of the disruptive behavior in writing.
2. Staff will complete an incident report upon multiple incidents of disruptive behavior. "Multiple incidents" is considered three or more incidents of behavior that is considered disruptive or failure to comply with rules.
3. Staff will notify the participant's parent/guardian or caregiver and provide the parent/guardian or caregiver a copy of the incident report

For any youth program participant who demonstrates unsafe behavior the following procedure will be observed by staff:

1. Staff reserves the right to remove the youth participant from a program or facility until the disruptive or unsafe behavior has been corrected.
2. Staff will complete an Incident Report documenting the disruptive and/or unsafe behavior.
3. Staff will notify the participant's parent, guardian or caregiver.
4. The Parks and Recreation Department reserves the right to dismiss the youth from the program or facility without warning when it is determined that a youth's unsafe behavior places other participants, himself or herself, and/or staff in danger.
5. Staff will contact law enforcement officers if determined to be necessary.

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If a youth participant is removed from a program or facility for disruptive or unsafe behavior, then PARD shall specify in writing the time and the conditions under which a participant may return.

If a youth participant is removed from a program or facility for disruptive or unsafe behavior, then PARD reserves the right to:

1. Withhold a refund of any fees for time remaining in a program to a youth participant that has been removed from the program or facility.
2. After multiple recorded incidents, prohibit further participation in City of Austin Parks and Recreation youth programs.

Attachments: N/A

Supersession History

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

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