



Calgary Parks

Adopt-A-Park Volunteer Manual 2024



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Important Phone Numbers

Parks Program Coordinator: Kaylee Hope
587-227-2655
Kaylee.Hope@calgary.ca

After Hours Urgent Issues 311**Emergencies 911**

WELCOME TO ADOPT-A-PARK

Adopt-a-Park encourages community involvement. It gives people the opportunity to maintain and beautify a local park or greenspace while bettering areas for all Calgarians.

The duties volunteers perform in this program by maintaining community parks and greenspaces is beneficial for Calgarians of all ages in all communities.

Adopt-a-Park Mission Statement:

The City of Calgary's Adopt-a-Park volunteer program provides Calgarians with additional outdoor opportunities in the community. These are self-guided volunteer opportunities that take place in parks and greenspaces throughout Calgary.

Volunteering with Calgary Parks is a great way to enjoy our outdoor parks and green spaces. Whether it's a few minutes a day or a few days a year that is contributed, volunteers are performing a valuable public service by helping to enhance The City's resources.

Calgary Parks Organization

The Adopt-a-Park program is a component of Calgary Parks, Service Education Division. In the Parks department, our unit promotes ecological literacy and action so that citizens are better able to understand their own communities functionally, culturally, and critically.

Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

Rights

- An orientation and detailed description of your duties and responsibilities.
- To have Volunteer Accident Coverage when you are performing your assigned and approved duties. (Note: Volunteers are not covered under W.C.B. but they have coverage with The City's Volunteer Accident Program.)
- To be trained to perform your duties to City of Calgary Parks Standards.
- To be relieved from a volunteer placement if the position does not suit the volunteer's needs.

Responsibilities

- Equipment
 - The volunteer will ensure the loaned equipment is kept and returned in a state of good repair and report any damage for repair
 - The volunteer will return the equipment if & when they stop volunteering.
- Volunteer opportunities
 - The volunteer will perform the volunteer duties as assigned, as per the instructions and guidelines provided in the volunteer manual and training video.
- To notify the Program Coordinator if you are unable to complete tasks provided.
- Safety
 - The volunteer will be expected to follow safety guidelines as discussed with the Program Coordinator prior to beginning volunteer duties
 - Volunteers are required to tell the Program Coordinator if any concerns, problems or injuries should arise while volunteering. All issues need to be documented.
 - Volunteers must read and adhere to prohibited activities outlined in this manual and training video
 - Volunteer will report when seeing users performing prohibited activities to Program Coordinator
- To read the volunteer manual and understand the volunteer policies and responsibilities.
- To notify your Program Coordinator of changes of address, phone numbers, etc.
- To be respectful and treat everyone fairly. Be conscious of your role as a representative of the City of Calgary and refrain from public criticism of the City, Parks, fellow volunteers, staff members and officials.
- To perform only duties agreed upon on the Volunteer Application, Registration Contract, and training video
- Your Program Coordinator is responsible for a large group of volunteers. Part of their role is to act as a public liaison between you and The City of Calgary. Any questions you have regarding volunteer policy should be directed to your Program Coordinator.

Calgary Parks Rights and Responsibilities

Rights

- Volunteers are expected to comply with mandatory orientation information as per City of Calgary Parks policies and professional standard.
- Expect the volunteer to understand their role as a volunteer and to do the assigned duties outlined in the volunteer manual and training video.
- To ensure all Adopt-A-Park sites are being maintained in a safe manner in accordance with the Adopt-A-Park Volunteer Manual Policies and City Bylaws.
- Evaluate the volunteer's performance, provide warning if prohibited activity is performed and end assignments if a volunteer does not meet expectations.
- Decline any volunteer unsuitable for the program.
- Collect loaned equipment at any time.

Responsibilities

- Ensure the volunteer has been provided with an orientation.
- Program Coordinators have a responsibility to comply with the City of Calgary Volunteer Management Policies
- Ensure each volunteer fully and accurately completes all required forms, including volunteer hours form and security clearances as needed.
- Provide a specific, detailed and clearly outlined position description and to ensure this is understood.
- Volunteer Training
 - Instruction will be given to each volunteer on each volunteer opportunity and the procedures as outlined in the volunteer manual and training video.
 - A volunteer manual will be provided to each volunteer as a reference on each Adopt-a-Park opportunity, volunteer activities, rights and responsibilities, safety and prohibited activities
 - City of Calgary Parks will loan and deliver to volunteers the appropriate equipment for participating in the program.
- Calgary Parks will follow up on issues/concerns brought to them by volunteers
- Calgary Parks will place each volunteer in a position consistent with his or her abilities.

Safety

Working alone:

Working alone as defined by the City of Calgary, Health, Safety and Wellness Policy means working where you cannot be seen or heard by another person and where you cannot expect a visit from another person.

Ways to eliminate or reduce situations where a volunteer will be alone including:

- Notifying a family member or neighbour when beginning your volunteer task
- Having another person with you when volunteering.
- Setting up a check-in system, by which you call or text someone at regular interval. Agree on a tracking method to be used if you are overdue.
- Carrying a personal alarm, cell phone or two-way radio. Remember to keep batteries charged.
- Avoiding being in the park between the hours of 10:00 pm and 6:00 am.

Vandalism:

- Vandalism or other crimes in progress should be reported immediately to the police or 911. Do not intervene.
- All vandalism and criminal occurrences noticed by volunteers should be reported to the Program Coordinator or through the *311 City of Calgary information phone line or 'app'.

Hazardous Material:

- Do not pick up any hazardous materials (hypo needles, glass etc). Please flag and report these items to 311.

General Safety tips:

- When raking or shoveling, remember to warm up and stretch well and not overexert yourself
- When bending over for extended periods of time stand up slowly to avoid dizziness etc.
- When lifting use proper lifting and bending technique to avoid back injury, be cognizant of the amount of weight you can lift without injuring yourself.
- Be aware of your surroundings such as hazards and obstacles in your way, busy roadways, and other park users.
- Wear appropriate clothing and non-slip footwear.

Media Contact

From time to time, media representatives interested in featuring Adopt-A-Park may approach volunteers. Volunteers are welcome to speak to the media however volunteers are not authorized to represent The City of Calgary during a media interview. You are expected to forward these requests to the Program Coordinator.

City of Calgary Parks encourages cordial and cooperative relations with all print and broadcast media. Because of the potential impact the news or feature story could have on the program, the Business Unit or the City. Volunteers are asked to politely request the reporter contact the Program Coordinator.

Prohibited Activities

Performing any of the following activities is grounds for termination from the Adopt-a-Park program and/or fines from bylaws. In a case where the prohibited activities are repeatedly being performed the Program Coordinator will provide the volunteer with a written notice to cease prohibited activities.

Volunteers are prohibited from:

- Planting of any species
- Pruning of any shrubs that are not hanging over a pathway
- Watering of any kind
- Spraying of pesticides
- Attempting to repair broken equipment
- Mowing grass in any area
- No volunteering during large events (ie. Volunteering on Prince's Island during Folk Fest)
- Playground painting
- Driving any vehicle or machinery in Calgary parks.
- Performing volunteer duties between the hours of 11:00 pm and 5:00 am.
- Approaching Vandals.
- Leaving equipment on pathways or sidewalks.
- Not following Safety Standards outlined in this manual.

Volunteer Activities

Being an Adopt-a-Park volunteer includes the following:

1. Volunteer duties as assigned:

- Maintaining designated park or greenspace
- Performing tasks throughout the season
- Proper equipment handling
- Litter and weed removal
- Equipment storage and maintenance

2. To perform only the approved duties as listed in this Manual

3. Complete and submit all required forms and volunteer hours each season

Registration/Application and Security Clearance Forms

When you sign up with Adopt-a-Park you will be asked to fill out 2 forms: The Volunteer Registration and Orientation Check List. These forms are necessary to make the Adopt-a-Park program work smoothly and safely, so each volunteer must completely and correctly fill out each form. Here is a brief description of each of the forms:

- The Volunteer Registration form gives the Program Coordinator the information needed about the volunteer for contact and management purposes. This also enables the City of Calgary to track how many volunteers are in each park.
- The Check List is necessary to verify that all areas of the orientation have been completed.

Misuse of Parks or Greenspaces

Adopt-a-Park volunteer opportunity areas are for volunteers to maintain. If the area is being misused the following process will occur.

1. The Program Coordinator will talk with the volunteer about the issue.
2. Calgary Parks will increase visitation at the site with Adopt-a-Park signage or sandwich boards with notice inserted that relates to the concern.
3. The City of Calgary Parks will change the location of the volunteer opportunity if issues with the site arise.

Volunteer Opportunities

Shrub Bed Maintenance

Do a perimeter check of the shrub bed before beginning the duties assigned. Look for any hazardous materials, litter, overhanging branches.

Lay out all equipment needed to perform assigned duties. Ensure equipment is laid out in an area that will not obstruct other park users from enjoying the greenspace safely.

Ensure removed weeds, litter, etc from the shrub bed are placed out of the way of other park users.

Only perform duties that you are capable of doing, please do not overdo it. Multiple visits to the same shrub bed is expected, not all the work needs to be completed in one visit.

Playground Maintenance

Do a perimeter check of the playground before beginning the duties assigned. Look for any hazardous materials, litter, broken equipment, graffiti.

Lay out all equipment needed to perform assigned duties. Ensure equipment is laid out in an area that will not obstruct other park/playground users from enjoying the greenspace safely. This is very important as there will more than likely be children present while performing assigned duties.

Ensure litter removed from the playground is placed out of the way of other park users.

Only perform duties that you are capable of doing, please do not overdo it. Multiple visits to the same playground is expected, not all the work needs to be completed in one visit.

General Litter Clean Up

Do a perimeter check of the designated area before beginning the duties assigned. Look for any hazardous materials, litter.

Lay out all equipment needed to perform assigned duties. Ensure equipment is laid out in an area that will not obstruct other park users from enjoying the greenspace safely.

Ensure litter removed from the designated area is disposed of correctly.

Only perform duties that you are capable of doing, please do not overdo it. Multiple visits to the same area is expected, not all the work needs to be completed in one visit.

Equipment Maintenance

Thoroughly clean the provided equipment after each use. This ensures the longevity of the equipment's lifespan.

Rinse all equipment used and leave out to dry properly before storing it. This decreases the chances of rust to form.

Store equipment in a cool, dry place when not being used.

Only use provided equipment when performing duties for the Adopt-a-Park program.

Report any broken equipment to the Program Coordinator. Replacement equipment will be provided if necessary.

VOLUNTEER JOB DESCRIPTION

The City of Calgary Parks

WORK UNIT: Activation & Education

ROLE TITLE: Adopt-A-Park Volunteer

PURPOSE/GOAL OF POSITION: The Adopt-A-Park volunteers help maintain a designated area/park/greenspace throughout the spring/summer/fall months

TYPE OF ROLE: Ongoing(**X**) Special Event () Special Project ()

WORK SITE: Various City of Calgary Parks

DUTIES/SAMPLE OF ACTIVITIES:

- Maintain shrub beds, playgrounds, or general litter clean ups in parks and greenspaces
- Ensure proper safety precautions are in place
- Maintain provided equipment
- Report emergency situations to proper officials
- Complete and submit all required forms and volunteer hours each season

BENEFITS:

- Enjoy the outdoors
- Community/environmental stewardship
- Meet new people
- Recognition for volunteer work

CHALLENGES AND RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE POSITION:

- Inclement weather
- Physical labour ie. Raking, removing weeds, litter clean up

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Enjoy working outdoors
- Enjoy working with people of all ages
- Take pride in contributing to ensure our parks/greenspaces are safe and clean

ORIENTATION & TRAINING PROVIDED:

- Orientation to the AAP Program is provided by Parks Staff
- Volunteer duties training provided by Parks Staff & Training Video