



Programming Policies

Behavior Guidelines - 11080

Date: October 27, 2009

Updated: October 20, 2020 and March, 2024

POLICY RE: Behavior Guidelines

Facilities and programs under the authority of the Board of Park Commissions of the Bloomington Department of Parks and Recreation are intended for the recreational use and enjoyment of residents of the City of Bloomington and its guests. Selected programs and services are available for individuals, groups and others which may be more specialized in nature. This policy is intended to regulate participant's conduct through consistency and to protect the rights of those participating in our programs and services.

The Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department abides by a zero tolerance atmosphere with respect to unwelcome and or offensive behavior in parks, facilities, programs and services. This includes vulgar language and verbal abuse to our staff and participants. Conduct in these categories constitutes ejection without warning.

Due to the unique nature of individual areas within Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department, each facility, program, park, and service area may establish its own rules and regulations, which shall augment this policy, and shall become the policy of said area. A copy of the regulations for an individual area or program shall be available upon request.

Rules of Conduct

1. Any behavior which is disruptive or which hinders use of Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department programs or services is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to verbal or physical harassment or assault, profanity, persons under the influence of a mind altering substance, or fighting.
2. Some parks and facilities, based on their size, location or design purpose, can attract a large gathering of participants, users or spectators. In these situations staff have observed that the inclusion of animals in this environment poses some threat for possible injury to other park users or where food products are sold the possibility of unsanitary conditions. For this reason the following parks have restrictions where animals, other than a service animal assisting persons with disabilities, cannot be brought into the park or facility in order to protect other park users. (see policy 13090)

Twin Lakes Sports Park (inside the fenced in area where the ball fields, bleachers and concessions areas are located)

Winslow Sports Complex (inside the fenced in area where the ball fields, bleachers and concessions areas are located)

Lower Cascades Ballfields (inside the fenced in area where the ball fields, bleachers and concession areas are located)

Bloomington Community Farmers' Market (on the blacktop and in the Food and Beverage Artisan Area)

3. The violation of federal, state, or local laws and ordinances will not be permitted at the Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department or on its property.
4. Tobacco, alcohol, illegal drugs are prohibited on Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department property. (A copy of the protocol for violation of tobacco use policy follows.)
5. The sale of products or services is not permitted on Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department property without prior approval of the department.
6. Taking surveys, asking people to sign petitions, taking video or audio footage, distributing leaflets, and other similar activities must be approved in advance by the department.
7. Parents are responsible for the behavior and actions of their children while they are in department facilities and participating in department programs and services. Children age seven and under must be accompanied by a parent or other responsible caregiver age eighteen or older at all times while on department property, unless the child is participating in a department program or service that is supervised by department employees.
8. Harassment of any person on the basis of race, sex, color, ancestry, national origin, religion, or sexual orientation is strictly forbidden. This includes unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors, and unwelcome and/ or offensive sexual comments.
9. The use of roller skates, roller blades, bicycles, and other wheeled vehicles or toys is not allowed inside department facilities except as expressly permitted by the Department.
10. Sleds, skis, toy vehicles, or any piece of equipment must be approved by an appropriate staff member. Dangerous or unsafe equipment is prohibited.
11. Speed limits must be adhered to while on Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department property.
12. Designated parking is available at most Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department sites. Parking in areas or spaces not designated as parking is strictly prohibited.

13. Unnecessary noise from vehicles, radios, equipment, or from another device or a person which disrupts any participant's ability to appropriately participate in a Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department activity or facility is prohibited.

14. It shall be considered trespass if anyone is found after hours on Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department properties that have established closing times. This rule extends to parking lots, playgrounds, surrounding walls, stages, and fences, etc.

15. No one shall interfere or hinder any officer, agent, employee, or volunteer of the Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department while engaging in duties of his or her office or employment.

16. Participants shall not engage in any sport, game, activity, etc. on Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department property in a rough or reckless manner as to endanger, injure or damage any person or property.

17. No one shall climb upon trees, plants, fences, walls, or other structures or property at Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department properties except such recreational equipment as may be installed by the department and intended for use by the public.

Disruptive Behavior

The Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department expects its staff to exercise good judgment and use sensitivity when intervening with participants whose behavior is interfering with other patrons' use or enjoyment of department facilities, programs, and services. In some cases, participants are simply unaware that their behavior is disruptive and a few words from a staff member are sufficient. Whenever these methods are ineffective, the following procedures may be followed in order to protect participants, department staff, and property.

1. The first contact with a participant should be a request to cease a specific behavior. If the participant does not cease the behavior, the staff member will repeat the request and give a verbal warning that if the behavior does not cease or is repeated, the participant will be evicted from the property for the remainder of the day. If the patron continues or resumes the disruptive behavior, the staff member will tell the participant to leave the property for the remainder of the day. Whenever possible, two staff members should be present when a participant is told to leave the property. Note: Structured programs and services, ie. Day camps have separate and distinct disruptive behavior policies.

2. If a child under the age of eighteen is causing a disturbance, the appropriate parent, guardian or caregiver shall be reminded of and/or given a copy of the Department's Parental Responsibility statement.

3. Under extreme circumstances, disruptive participants may be suspended from Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department property, programs, and or services according to the Sanctioning Guidelines set forth below. Repeated or particularly severe behavior problems that seem to warrant harsher penalties should be referred to the appropriate supervisory staff member. If the participant is a child, the parent will be

informed of this action in writing and the parent will be required to contact the appropriate supervisory staff member before the child can be readmitted.

4. If a patron behaves in a violent or threatening manner, staff members may call the police immediately.

Sanctioning Guidelines

Major Violations

Assault, battery, intimidation, fighting, or other violence, theft, harassment, criminal damage to property, extreme disorderly conduct, and repetitive or consistent negative behaviors may be considered a major violation. In addition, other offenses that violate the basic safe and civil atmosphere expected at Parks facilities, programs or services may be considered to be major violations.

The following guidelines shall be used to determine sanctions for major violations:

Minor aged participants (17 yrs and under): 6 months to 1 year suspension

Adult aged participants (18 yrs and over): 6 months to 1 year suspension

Minor Violations

Disruptive behavior, use of profane language, minor infractions of house rules, and other similar behaviors may be considered minor violations.

The following guidelines shall be used to determine sanctions for minor violations:

Minor aged participants (17 yrs & under): 0 days to 1 month suspension

Adult aged participants (18 yrs & over): 1 day to 3 months suspension

In determining the appropriate sanction for a major or minor violation, the department shall consider the age of the participant, the age(s) of the victim(s), the extent of damage to any property, and any other circumstances relating to the violation. If the department deems it appropriate, it may consider additional or alternative sanctions in special circumstances.

Conduct Response Policy

The following procedures shall be used in addressing violations of parks policies:

1. At the time that Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department staff become aware of the violation, staff shall address the violation with the offending participant.
2. Staff shall make an initial, on-site response to the participant, and shall complete incident reporters.

3. When appropriate, the department may augment the staff on-site response according to the Sanctioning Guidelines set out above. The participant shall be notified of department sanctions by telephone or in writing.
4. If the participant does not agree with the on-site response or any additional department response, the participant may submit a written appeal to the department Administrator within 14 days of the date of notification.
5. The Administrator shall submit the appeal to the Board of Parks Commissioners for review; however, the board may delegate the appeal to an advisory council if the board determines that the circumstances of the incident make the delegation appropriate.
6. Review of an appeal shall take place as an agenda item at a public meeting of the board or relevant advisory council. Upon review of an appeal, the board (or advisory council) shall take statements from the participant, Bloomington Park and Recreation Department staff, witnesses, and other interested persons. The board (or advisory council) may uphold, repeal, or modify the sanction imposed by the department. The board may, at its election, choose to review any matter heard on appeal by an advisory council.

Parental Responsibility Statement

Parents are responsible for the behavior and actions of their children while they are in Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department facilities and participating in department programs and services. Children age 7 and under must be accompanied by a parent or other responsible caregiver age 18 or older at all times while on Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department property unless the program or service is supervised by a department employee.

Dropped-Off Children

Parents should be aware that staff supervision at any Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department facility, or any pool, may be limited. No child under the age of seven shall be admitted to these facilities without adult attendance (age 10 for pools). All parents or guardians who are dropping off children at a Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department facility shall sign a release allowing medical attention in the event of an emergency.

Protocol for Violation of Tobacco Use Policy in Parks/Facilities

1. Staff is not expected to seek out smokers and ask them to cease smoking.
2. If staff notices non-compliance or another patron brings it to staff's attention, staff will request the individual to cease the activity.
3. Staff will not take any further action to cause a confrontation.
4. In extreme cases, staff can call the police for assistance.