

Volunteer Guide

Thank you!

We appreciate your interest in volunteering. We welcome you and hope your volunteer experience will be rewarding. This guide will help to inform you about volunteering with the Benicia Parks and Community Services (Recreation) Department.

We hope to answer all your questions about our volunteer program in this guide. However, never hesitate to contact us if you have any additional questions.

Parks and Community Services has volunteer opportunities in the following program areas:

- ♥ Preschool Activities
- ♥ Afterschool Activities
- ♥ Senior Center Programs
- ♥ Park Beautification
- ♥ Waterfront Beautification
- ♥ Cemetery Beautification
- ♥ Youth Sports

Benicia Parks and Community Services

370 East L Street (office)

707-746-4285

pcs@ci.benicia.ca.us



Mobile App:
BeniciaRec



Facebook:
@BeniciaRec



Instagram:
BeniciaRec



YouTube:
Benicia Parks
and Community
Services

Website:

www.beniciarec.org



Our Commitment

The Volunteer Program is committed to:

- Providing a wide variety of opportunities and flexible schedules for volunteers
- Providing open communication regarding job duties, and concerns or issues, should they arise
- Making safety the highest priority for all volunteers, staff and community members who interact with us
- Treating all volunteers equally, and with dignity and respect, regardless of age, sex, color, race, national origin, religious preference, political beliefs, or disabilities that do not prohibit participation of a volunteer.

“Volunteers are not paid -- not because they are worthless, but because they are priceless.”

Familiar Parks & Facilities

- ▲ Benicia Community Park (Big Slide Park)
- ▲ Jack London Park
- ▲ City Park w/ Gazebo
- ▲ Benicia Community Center
- ▲ James Lemos Pool
- ▲ City Gym
- ▲ Benicia Senior Center
- ▲ Clock Tower
- ▲ Bocce & Tennis Courts
- ▲ First Street Green
- ▲ First Street Pier
- ▲ Lake Herman Regional Park
- ▲ 9th Street Park and Boat Launch
- ▲ 9th Street Beach
- ▲ Matthew Turner (12th Street) Park

Who we are...

The Parks and Community Services (Recreation) Department maintains and operates 211 developed park and landscaped acres, plus one 577-acre regional park, 35 city-owned buildings, 1 City-owned cemetery, 1 aquatic facility, and 1 community center. The Department has responsibility for over 68 open space access areas and maintenance of a lighting and landscape district, consisting of 5 zones.

The Community Services Division is responsible for providing a wide variety of recreational programs, events, and services to a broad spectrum of individuals and community groups. Programs include instructional classes, youth and adult sports, afterschool program, camps, preschool, facility rentals, and special events. The Division is also responsible for the digital RecGuide, social media, and the scheduling of City athletic fields.

We invite you to visit our website at www.beniciarec.org to view information about all our programs, services, parks and facilities.





Volunteer Program Guidelines

Application process:

Individuals wishing to volunteer must sign up on Helper Helper app (link to app is at www.ci.benicia.ca.us/PCSVolunteers).

Liability waiver:

Volunteers will be required to sign a liability waiver prior to participating in any job duties.

Orientation:

You will be invited to an orientation (in person, or zoom) prior to assignment of duties. Orientation will cover policies, procedures, and general information about volunteering.

Training:

For one-time volunteer opportunities, shifts will begin with demonstrations or training for the duties required. For ongoing volunteer hours, training is provided by staff in the program area.

Age requirement:

Volunteers must be 18 years of age or older. Any volunteer younger than 18 requires a parental signature to participate. Anyone younger than 14 may volunteer with a parent or guardian.

Background check:

Volunteer positions require background checks to be completed prior to assignment of duties if working in a program with minors (for example: Preschool, Afterschool, Youth Sports). Information on where to be fingerprinted will be provided at orientation.

Volunteer Expectations

- Keep all contact information on file current
- Maintain log of volunteer hours
- Treat fellow volunteers and staff with respect
- Practice good customer service skills and represent the City of Benicia with kindness and professionalism
- Be accepting and flexible when it comes to assigned duties
- Provide feedback so that we can address issues & make improvements, but also so that we can give kudos to staff and volunteers.
- Refrain from use of alcohol, tobacco and drugs during duties, and use of alcohol or drugs prior to volunteer hours
- Arrive on time and ready to participate
- Look your best - dress appropriately
- Report safety issues and injuries to staff on site immediately
- Be cautious when posting to social media, as fellow volunteers and program participants may not be posted without permission
- Tell your story about volunteering, but do not speak as a representative of the City, if asked
- **MOST IMPORTANTLY**, enjoy yourself and leave with a sense of accomplishment knowing that you have made a difference



Program Policies

Time commitment:

This is up to each individual, and the availability of hours. You may wish to volunteer on a regular basis or for a short term commitment. It is important to understand that once a volunteer has committed to an event or program, attendance and reliability are important to the success of the program.

Department employees as volunteers:

Employees may volunteer their services, but are prohibited from participating in duties that they are normally paid to perform within the scope of their employment. The Department may not accept volunteer services that result in layoff or the reduction of hours or services of any existing City employee.

Supervision:

While serving as a volunteer, your duties will be supervised by a member of the Parks and Community Services staff person. Staff are on site to coordinate assigned tasks, support volunteers by providing training, and respond to problems or concerns as they arise. It is your responsibility to notify our Department, or the staff on site, of any changes to your availability.

Dress code:

As a volunteer for the City of Benicia, it is important that you represent the City in a positive manner. Please wear appropriate clothing for your job duties, and refrain from wearing clothing with offensive or inappropriate languages, images, or words; any clothing that promotes illegal acts; or political party affiliated clothing. Please be sure to wear any identification or safety gear provided by the City, at all times during your assignment.

Confidentiality:

Volunteers agree to not reveal any private, personal, or otherwise sensitive information about any staff, participants, or fellow volunteers.

“One of the greatest gifts you can give is your time”

Transportation/Driving:

Volunteers are not permitted to drive City of Benicia vehicles, unless specifically assigned to do so as part of job duties. Volunteer will carry approval letter stating right to operate a City vehicle with them at all times, if driving is required.

Volunteers are responsible for arranging their own transportation to and from assignments and finding appropriate, legal parking.

Drug/Alcohol free workplace statement:

Volunteers are expected to maintain a strict no drugs or alcohol policy while volunteering, including abstaining from consumption or use prior to any assigned shift.

Smoking policy:

Per City Municipal Code, smoking is prohibited in enclosed areas, including City buildings and vehicles. Additionally, Municipal Code prohibits smoking in unenclosed recreational areas, including park facilities, as well as other events open to the general public.

Media requests and right of publicity:

If approached by a member of the media regarding a City of Benicia matter, refer them to the staff on site. Volunteers are not authorized to speak on behalf of the City regarding City matters.

The Parks and Community Services Department reserved the right to photograph facilities, activities and program participants for potential promotion use. Social media can be a great tool to share your volunteer experiences, but it also needs to be used with caution. Please be respectful if mentioning the City in your post, and do not post a picture that contains participants, staff, or fellow volunteers without their permission.

Injury/Incident Reporting:

Any injury, accident or incident, must be reported to the on site staff immediately, regardless of severity. Depending on the nature of the accident/incident, a volunteer may be asked to fill out paperwork. To help prevent injury, report an hazards to the site staff immediately. All sites will be equipped with a first aid kit. Injuries incurred while performing volunteer duties will be covered under the City's Workers' Compensation plan.



Program Policies, continued

Time records:

A valid record of volunteer hours is one of the clearest ways to show the benefits of your volunteer efforts. You are responsible for keeping track of your hours, and submitting them to the City for recordkeeping. Documenting your hours is valuable for statistical records and for recognition of service. We will provide a platform for you to record and submit hours.

Gifts:

Please do not accept any gifts from community members or businesses. We do not want to create an atmosphere where our community feels obligated to reward staff or volunteers for completing their duties.

Feedback:

Feedback of our volunteer experience may be requested periodically in order to provide the best quality service to our customers, as well as improve the overall volunteer program.

If you have comments or suggestions to improve your placement or experience, or have a concern about something, please bring these issue to our Department at the earliest possible time. Your feedback may also be submitted through an online survey (providing contact information is optional). The link to the online feedback form is available on our Volunteer website at www.ci.benicia.ca.us/PCsvolunteers.

Volunteer Recognition

We wish to recognize our volunteers annually during National Volunteer week in April. Volunteers may also periodically be given the spotlight on social media, to highlight accomplishments and underscore the immense value volunteers bring to our community.



Ending your volunteer assignment:

To voluntarily end your commitment, please inform the Parks and Community Services Department as soon as possible, with as much notice as possible. If a position is not working for you, please let us know, as we may be able to find a better fit for your service.

Termination/Separation:

In rare cases, it may be necessary for the City to dismiss a volunteer. The following behaviors will result in separation:

- ◆ Theft, misuse, destruction or defacement of property
- ◆ Inappropriate behavior towards visitors, program participants, other volunteers or staff
- ◆ Working under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- ◆ Possession of weapons or illegal drugs on site
- ◆ Excessive tardiness or absences
- ◆ Unwillingness to follow through on job duties or follow direction of on site Staff