

Friends of Grand Rapids Parks Volunteer Manual

Dear Volunteer,

On behalf of the Board of Directors and Staff, I want to thank you for your interest in and involvement with Friends of Grand Rapids Parks.

The continued efforts of Friends of Grand Rapids Parks to cultivate community green spaces requires a community wide effort. In addition to the commitment of the City of Grand Rapids Parks and Recreation Department and Friends of Grand Rapids staff, we must have strong community partnerships. Volunteers like you play a critical role in completing tree and green space improvement projects and planning engaging programs in public spaces.

The outstanding volunteer programs we provide serve people in a variety of ways, from tree planting to family events. Volunteers are true partners with our parks and trees.

Thank you in advance for helping us to grow vibrant communities by connecting people through parks and trees. I look forward to working closely with you as we connect to serve our community through parks and trees.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephanie".

Stephanie Adams
Executive Director

Purpose of Volunteer Manual

This Manual has been created to guide you in your volunteer experience with Friends of Grand Rapids Parks. This booklet will share with you our volunteer policies and scope of volunteer work.

This volunteer manual will answer the frequently asked questions about our volunteer programs. You are encouraged to talk with your supervisor and volunteer coordinator if you have any questions about the content of this manual.

What to Expect from Friends of Grand Rapids Parks

- Establish a healthy and safe environment
- Provide at least one staff member or team leader on site for the full duration of the volunteer project
- Provide all equipment and supplies needed for volunteer project
- Provide basic work gloves for all volunteers
- Provide the opportunity to give feedback on your Friends of Grand Rapids Parks volunteer experience
- Orientation and onsite training
- Provide on-site first-aid kit

What to Expect from the Volunteer

- Follow all instructions given by Friends of Grand Rapids Parks staff or team leader at volunteer project
- Follow all policies and guidelines of Friends of Grand Rapids Parks, sign an Authorization/Waiver Form, and engage in appropriate behavior at all times
- Bring bug spray and sunscreen, if prone to mosquito bites or sunburn
- Have fun! Working with trees or in our local parks is a truly wonderful way to spend a day

Policies

Volunteer Management

There will be a minimum of one Friends of Grand Rapids staff or Team Leader present for the entire volunteer project. Staff or Team Leader will provide all instructions for the project and review safety procedures.

Record Management

Every volunteer is entered into a confidential volunteer database for safety and security reasons and to track volunteer hours. Please be sure to sign in upon arriving. Please notify Friends of Grand Rapids with a change of address, phone, email or other information, as needed.

Inclement Weather Policy

Weather will be monitored closely for all projects but can be unpredictable at times. In the event of inclement weather, including but not limited to snow, ice, rain, or sleet, please use your best judgment if you do not feel safe traveling. Please contact Friends of Grand Rapids Parks with your concerns immediately. Special volunteer projects, i.e. painting or staining, may be canceled due to weather restrictions. If an event must be canceled, there will be 24-hour notification and the event will be rescheduled for a different date. In extreme circumstances, last-minute cancellations may occur. In such cases, a notice will be sent at least 1 hour before the event. All notifications will be made via email to registered participants or the immediate volunteer contact. It is the responsibility of the volunteer contact to pass information concerning cancellation to their volunteer group.

Sharps Needle Policy

Sharps are devices with sharp points or edges that can puncture or cut skin. Examples of sharps objects are: needles, syringes, lancets, auto injector, infusion sets, and connection needles/sets. Do not pick up broken glass or other sharp objects with hands or attempt to recap used needles. Use mechanical means such as a brush and dustpan, trash pickers, tongs, etc. Used sharps should be immediately placed in a sharps disposal container. A heavy-duty plastic container can be used as an alternative. Do not dispose sharps in a glass container. Do not recycle or reuse sharps. Sharps should never be disposed in regular trash.

If you are accidentally stuck by another person's used needle or other sharp:

1. Wash the exposed area right away with water and soap or use a skin disinfectant (antiseptic) such as rubbing alcohol or hand sanitizer.
2. Seek immediate medical attention by calling your physician or local hospital.

Follow these same instructions if you get blood or other bodily fluids in your eyes, nose, mouth, or on your skin.

Scheduling Policy

Requests may be made by the volunteer group for specific dates to complete volunteer projects. All dates and times are subject to approval contingent upon the City of Grand Rapids Parks and Recreation Department, Grand Rapids Public Schools (if applicable), and Friends of Grand Rapids Parks staff availability and calendars. There is a minimum of 5 volunteers needed to schedule a volunteer day.

Attendance and Time Policy

Please arrive at your volunteer event on time. Registration will take place during the first 15 minutes of the scheduled event. All volunteers must sign in at the event and complete an Authorization Form before allowed to participate in volunteer project. Sign in sheets will be available upon arrival.

Change of Venue

Certain circumstances, such as weather, immediate park's needs, etc., may require a location change for a scheduled volunteer day. Friends of Grand Rapids Parks reserves the right to change the event location. Information regarding any event location change will be shared via email as soon as the decision has been made.

Minor Policy

All youth under the age of 18 must have Authorization Form completed and signed by a parent and/or guardian before the youth will be allowed to participate in the volunteer project. An adult must accompany all minors under the age of 17 the entire duration of the volunteer event.

Equipment and Property Policy

All equipment, tools, and supplies needed for the volunteer project will be provided by Friends of Grand Rapids Parks. Volunteers should not bring any power tools. All property and equipment of Friends of Grand Rapids Parks must be returned to the Staff or Team Leader at the end of the volunteer event.

Dress Code

Clothes may get dirty during the volunteer project. Wear clothes that you are comfortable with potentially staining or getting excessive dirt on. Volunteers frequently work with oil-based paints, woodchips, and dirt. Closed-toe shoes are required. Long pants are also encouraged.

Food Policy

Volunteers should bring a snack and water. Friends of Grand Rapids Parks does its best to provide a water source for volunteers but this is not always possible.

Conduct

Volunteers are expected to follow rules of conduct that will protect the interest and safety of all volunteers and staff. Inappropriate conduct will lead to dismissal. Examples of inappropriate conducts are: theft, improper use of Friends of Grand Rapids equipment, lack of cooperation, violation of federal, state, or local safety and health rules.

Equal Opportunity

Friends of Grand Rapids Parks provides equal opportunities without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sexual preference, age, or disability. Volunteers are expected to follow all instructions given by Friends of Grand Rapids Parks staff or team leader at volunteer project.

Smoking & Drug-Free Environment

Smoking is strictly prohibited at all Friends of Grand Rapids volunteer projects. All Friends of Grand Rapids Parks volunteer sites are Drug-Free zones. While participating in Friends of Grand Rapids Parks related activities a volunteer may not use, possess, distribute, sell or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. Occasionally, Friends of Grand Rapids Parks may sponsor events where alcohol is served. In such situations, volunteers who consume alcohol are expected to act in a responsible manner.

Safety and Liability

Immediately report any injuries and/or unsafe conditions to the Friends of Grand Rapids staff or Team Leader.



Friends of Grand Rapids Parks Contacts

www.friendsofgrparks.org

Mailing address:

PO Box 3199
Grand Rapids, MI 49501

Street address:

15 Ionia Ave SW, Suite 540
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Stephanie Adams
Executive Director

616.307.2748
stephanie@friendsofgrparks.org

Dia Noble
Community Engagement Coordinator

810.328.3552
dia@friendsofgrparks.org

Maggie Harthoorn
Urban Forest Coordinator

319.721.6818
maggie@friendsofgrparks.org

Marissa Visser
Special Event Coordinator

616.818.5514
marissa@friendsofgrparks.org

Audrey Hughey
GIS Specialist/Urban Forest Assistant

269.929.6900
audrey@friendsofgrparks.org