

Park Ranger

FLSA Status: Covered
Bargaining Unit: Portland City Laborers 483 (PCL)

GENERAL SUMMARY

Positions in this class educate and inform patrons about park activities, rules and regulations and promote the safety and security of park patrons, employees, facilities and grounds of assigned parks. Park Rangers explain and enforce park codes and rules, issue warnings, exclusions and citations, oversee assigned parks or functions, provide direction, coordination and training for temporary, seasonal and volunteer staff, and perform related duties as assigned.

Distinguishing Characteristics

Park Rangers patrol assigned parks and natural areas, interacting with the public to promote safe and secure parks and effective customer service for all park patrons. Incumbents must exercise discretion and judgment in determining the appropriate course of action when dealing with public nuisances, group conflicts, and general public interactions and determine when situations require police assistance/intervention. Incumbents must represent the city positively while also enforcing codes, ordinances and regulations pertaining to park usage.

Park Rangers also coordinate with community groups and staff of other bureaus and agencies on a variety of park-related issues, initiatives, and projects. They recognize and surface trends and ongoing issues and present ideas and recommendation on resolutions. Park Rangers are typically assigned to downtown/west side parks with higher levels of utilization, conflicts, interest groups and specialized activities, although they can be assigned to park throughout the City as needed. They may provide oversight or take on lead responsibilities for assigned parks, especially for those with unique functions or activities, such as parking-related duties in Washington Park or tracking park usage patterns in Forest Park. They work with Seasonal Park Ranger and volunteer and temporary staff and provide on the job training and guidance as needed.

Park Rangers are distinguished from Seasonal Park Rangers by the former's authority to issue citations, and responsibility for short and long-term projects, oversight of assigned parks and providing direction, coordination and training to volunteer, temporary and seasonal staff. Park Rangers are distinguished from the Parks Technicians series by the Park Ranger's emphasis on public safety and security and enforcement of park codes and rules.

Typical Duties/Examples of Work

1. Patrols assigned parks on foot, bicycle and/or in vehicle; provides a positive presence; promotes enjoyment of the park and voluntary compliance with park rules; provides

information to park patrons about park history, schedule of activities and rules, codes, hours and other general information; observes nuisance or crime activity and calls law enforcement as appropriate; provides First Aid to injured persons; ensures proper closure and security of buildings; monitors park areas for damage to grounds, equipment and/or facilities; picks up and properly disposes of litter; documents daily activity in parks and follows up on citizen concerns.

2. Enforces park codes and rules; interprets and communicates park codes and rules to the public; issues warnings, exclusions and citations; acts as a deterrent to park code violations; involves law enforcement authorities as necessary to maintain park security and safety; provides traffic and event management for various park activities as assigned.
3. Helps resolve conflicts between park users; addresses a variety of park use issues, such as permit-related conflicts, homelessness and illegal camping, traffic/pedestrian/sidewalk/path use, dog-related issues, substance abuse in parks and other problems; responds to citizen complaints regarding nuisance activity in parks; interprets procedures and regulations to determine the specific park violation.
4. Coordinates with other park staff and law enforcement to investigate suspicious activities; provides assistance to police when necessary; writes detailed and accurate reports for use by Parks and Recreation Bureau and by the police, city attorneys, and other outside agencies including social service providers; testifies in court and before hearings officers on criminal cases, park exclusions, and animal control issues; responds to calls for service; implements emergency closure of parks or facilities due to public health, safety or other issues; coordinates with first responder and first aid services; provides first aid.
5. Identifies ongoing issues or trends related to park usage, security, code enforcement and customer service; surface and escalate issues; proposes ideas and solutions; participates in broader discussions of nuisance and crime issues in parks; assists and coordinates with other city bureaus, law enforcement agencies and community groups to coordinate projects and address issues.
6. Leads assigned projects; coordinates with stakeholders, monitors and reports on project progress; prioritizes daily activities with longer term projects.
7. Interacts with community groups; coordinates assigned short-term and long-term initiatives that address group goals and concerns; maintains positive relationships with community group leaders; provides training to volunteer and community groups on park safety, park watch and volunteer foot patrol; attends public safety, neighborhood association and assigned community meetings to participate in discussions of park-related issues and provide information about park codes.
8. Provides lead oversight in assigned parks or for key initiatives; facilitates communication, coordination and training; schedules and organizes meetings with stakeholders; provides training, direction and support to affected groups; coordinates work of a team, including seasonal park rangers and volunteers.

9. Performs related duties as assigned.

Required Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

Knowledge of: City codes related to Parks; federal, state and local laws and rules applicable to public safety and security in parks; observation and investigation techniques and procedures; social service techniques; the impact of enforcement actions; the political sensitivity of public perception.

Ability to: deal tactfully with the public; explain park policies, rules and procedures; resolve conflicts and mediate disputes; assess violations and develop appropriate responses; maintain accurate logs, notes and records and prepare clear reports; provide factual information based on observation; prepare for Code Hearings and testify at judicial proceedings; operate computer software related to position; convey and obtain pertinent information from sometimes upset or difficult people; follow written and verbal procedures; provide training and work direction to seasonal or temporary staff; coordinate work efforts; establish and maintain effective working relationships with a diversity of others.

Skill in: customer service, conflict resolution and communication techniques; assessing violation and developing solutions; applying practical judgment to enforcement and information gathering situations; two-way radio procedures; task prioritization and project management; alertness and situational awareness, particularly in secluded areas.

Special Requirements

Valid state driver's license. Ability to obtain State of Oregon license for unarmed security guards within 6 months of appointment. Successful completion of bicycle certification course, defensive tactics, first aid/CPR, and familiarization with crisis intervention and social services. Must pass a background investigation (to include fingerprinting) and physical capacity testing.

WORKING CONDITIONS

This position requires working outdoors in all weather conditions, alone or in a team, and involves frequent interaction with potentially hostile members of the public. Requires alertness to potential dangers associated with working in secluded areas. The duties of this position entail physically demanding work on foot, bicycle and in city-owned vehicles.

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Class History:

Adopted: 08/15/11

Revised: May 28, 2014

Changed to DCTU class spec format; updated duties to include issuing citations, oversight of staff in assigned parks; and project assignments.
7-1-17 Union changed from DCTU to PCL