



PORTLAND PARKS & RECREATION

Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland

Volunteer Garden Management Roles

The volunteer work of garden leaders is critical to the success of Portland Parks & Recreation's Portland Community Gardens. Garden leaders are committed to supporting all community members and creating an inclusive and welcoming environment at the garden. They encourage cooperation, shared responsibilities, and foster mutually beneficial and respectful relationships between gardeners, neighbors, visitors, and staff. Managers act as the liaison between gardeners and staff and help new gardeners integrate into the community. They educate gardeners about program rules, encourage community involvement, and help their garden to be a beautiful, productive community asset.

Leadership Teams: We encourage a team approach because it helps share the diverse aspects of garden management and brings in different perspectives. Teams create more sustainable leadership which allows garden management to change so it does not always rely on the same person. Leadership teams open opportunities for everyone to have a role and use each person's unique talents to make the garden greater as a whole.

The following tasks are important elements of a successful site-based leadership team:

Foster an inclusive community through community building and events. This may include:

- Orient new gardeners to the site and be welcoming and friendly to all gardeners.
- Encourage gardeners to build relationships by facilitating introductions and communication among gardeners.
- Coordinate garden clean-up days, gatherings, potlucks, and meetings.
- Broaden site leadership by recruiting people to help with projects, produce donations, leading work days.
- Seek collaboration, help, opinions, and participation.

Educate gardeners about program policies and work as a team with staff to encourage best practices for the benefit of the community. This may include:

- Educate gardeners about [program policies](#) and provide seasonal reminders.
- Share staff site visit dates with gardeners to encourage active gardening.
- Connect a gardener in need with resources or extra help.
- Check in with gardeners and staff when plots are inactive.

Provide inclusive communication to gardeners about updates, events, resources, and policies. This may include:

- Send emails using provided Gmail account for all garden manager email correspondence.
- Use other forms of communication for gardens who do not use email such as phone calls, letters, and posting signs.
- Work with staff to get messages translated into the languages spoken in your garden.
- Recruit a language leader to help communicate with gardeners whose primary language is not English.

- Willing to problem solve at the site and work together to resolve issues.

Support an inclusive community where everyone contributes to benefit the whole garden and shares responsibility for site maintenance.

- Identify community needs and work with staff and gardeners to get resources and collaborate on projects.
- Get to know your gardeners, their interests, and how they want to contribute.
- Facilitate community decision making.
- Post “to do” lists to encourage gardeners to complete community service hours.
- Report volunteer hours to staff in July and November.
- Notify staff of maintenance needs like broken locks, irrigation leaks.

Recruitment/term: Garden managers are self-selected or recruited by staff and outgoing leaders. Managers must register as a PP&R volunteer and pass a criminal history check which screens for major criminal convictions to ensure the safety of program participants. Applicants do not need to provide a social security number. Garden leaders are encouraged to commit to a minimum of one full garden season and each fall will have the option of continuing onto the following year or assisting in recruiting a replacement. Two seasons is preferred to allow time to build relationships and learn the role.

Time commitment: Approximately 8-16 hours/month. Managers attend garden leader meetings, trainings, and meet with staff to identify goals and make plans for the site.