



## **Guide to becoming an Independent Contractor**

This guide was created in order to allow service providers to acquaint themselves with the Park District and the process of becoming an Independent Contractor for the Park Ridge Recreation and Park District. The guide is also designed to serve as a resource for expectations for Park District current Independent Contractors.

### ***WHAT CAN THE PARK DISTRICT OFFER CONTRACTORS?***

Teaching a class at the Park Ridge Park District has many benefits:

- The Park District has access to great parks and facilities including gymnasiums, classrooms, meeting rooms, aquatic and ice facilities, as well as many athletic fields and courts.
- The Park District advertises classes in its Brochures which are mailed out to all Park Ridge residents four times each year. All class information is also available 24 hours a day on our website. Often classes are also featured in other marketing venues such as school e-newsletters, press releases to local newspapers, and flyers.
- The Park District uses an advanced registration system that allows it to maintain facility bookings for all programs and allows for efficient processing of all registrations. Up-to-date rosters, attendance worksheets, and waitlist information can be sent to instructors at any time. Instructors also have the ability to check the registration numbers of their programs using the Park District website 24 hours a day.
- Participants are able to register for programs in the way that is most convenient for them including online for classes at any time of day or night, in person, by mail or fax. We accept cash, checks, Visa and MasterCard payments.
- The Park District accepts registrations from both residents and non-residents, giving everyone the opportunity to participate in classes and offering contractors the opportunity to attract participants outside of Park Ridge as well. Residents receive a one week priority registration period after which registration is open to non-residents.
- Independent Contractors for the Park Ridge Recreation and Park District benefit by being affiliated with an organization that is rich in history and which enjoys a positive reputation in the Park Ridge community.

### ***QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS GUIDE***

If you have any questions about the information included in this guide, feel free to contact the Park District, which can be reached using the information below:

**Park Ridge Park District  
ATTN: Recreation Program Division Manager  
2701 W. Sibley Street  
Park Ridge, IL 60068  
847-692-5127  
[www.prparks.org](http://www.prparks.org)**

# *Becoming an Independent Contractor*

## **HOW TO BECOME AN INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR**

In order to become an Independent Contractor for the Park Ridge Recreation and Park District, a potential contractor must first submit a Program Proposal (included in this guide) for each proposed course. Proposals should be returned to the Park Ridge Recreation and Park District at 2701 West Sibley Street, Park Ridge, IL 60068 and are accepted year round. Incomplete or illegible proposals will not be considered.

Once a proposal has been submitted, the appropriate Program Supervisor in the Recreation Department will review the document and notify the potential Independent Contractor if the Park District would like to meet to discuss the program ideas in more detail. The Program Supervisor can offer advice regarding what types of programs, dates, and times have been popular at the Park District as well as answer questions regarding facility availability, contractor policies, etc.

Not all programs—even quality ones—will be accepted. For example, the Park District may not accept proposals that are not in line with the Park District’s mission or are very similar to programs that the Park District is currently offering. Also, programs that have been offered in the past that have been cancelled due to low enrollment may not be accepted unless the instructor can demonstrate that the instructor has the necessary number of participants interested. There is no exclusivity to Independent Contractors or the classes they teach and should be aware that returning Independent Contractors will not continue offering the activity without an updated proposal and signed amendment to the original Independent Contractor Agreement.

If a program is accepted, Independent Contractors are required to provide the following items in order to be approved as an Independent Contractor for the Park Ridge Recreation and Park District. Once approved, you will enter into an Independent Contractor Agreement with the Park Ridge Recreation and Park District.

### Items Required for Approval as an Independent Contractor

- A Certificate of Insurance with the Park Ridge Recreation and Park District listed as the certificate holder as well as additional insured with at least \$2 million dollar general liability coverage. An endorsement naming the Park Ridge Recreation and Park District, its officers, officials, employees, and volunteers must accompany the Certificate of Insurance (often referred to as page CG 2011). Please note that the Park District has guidelines to determine which types of contractors are required to provide insurance (based on the class activities). New Contractors should assume that they will be required to provide insurance until they are told otherwise.
- If the Contractor has employees, proof of worker’s compensation and employer’s liability coverage is required. If the Contractor has no employees, a letter stating that the contractor is the sole proprietor is required.
- Proof that the Contractor and Contractor’s staff, volunteers, substitutes and sub-contractors that may be involved in providing services on behalf of the Contractor have completed and satisfactorily passed a background check through the State of Illinois (at a minimum) and have been cross-referenced with the State of Illinois and Federal sexual offender registry within the past three years. Background checks can be completed through the Park Ridge Recreation and Park District for an additional fee or Contractors can provide proof that they have completed these checks on their own. If an Independent Contractor

chooses to have the Park District complete the background checks, the fee that the Park District incurs for completing this service will be subtracted from the Independent Contractor's initial invoice.

## *Activity Information*

### **REGISTRATION**

The Park Ridge Recreation and Park District shall be responsible for and have complete control over the registration of the participants. Under no circumstances is a contractor to accept payments, except for pre-approved supply fees. All registrations are processed on a first-come first-served basis. All participants must be registered with the Park District before being allowed into any class. It is the instructor's responsibility to ensure that all participants are registered and fully paid (by checking participation against the roster) prior to attending the class.

### **PROGRAM SCHEDULING**

Independent Contractors are responsible for submitting class proposals and schedules through the Program Proposal. At a minimum, this should be completed on a quarterly basis. Typically the Park District does not sign Independent Contractor Agreements for programs for more than one year at a time. Park District Program Supervisors will attempt to accommodate instructor's schedule requests. Programs are normally scheduled to coincide with the printing and mailing of the Park District's quarterly program guide. In order to maximize the effectiveness of this important marketing tool, Contractors should make sure that their programs adhere to the following general schedules:

<u>Program Season</u>	<u>Program Information Due</u>	<u>Programs Take Place</u>
Winter	August	January-March
Spring ( <i>includes summer camps</i> )	November	April-May
Summer	January	June-August
Autumn ( <i>includes holiday programs</i> )	April	September-December

Please note that Independent Contractor Agreements must be signed and all necessary paperwork must be completed before a program will be placed in the program guide. Contractors should allow ample time for this entire process.

### **CHANGES TO CLASSES**

Although the Park District strives to give instructors as much control over their programs as possible, the Park District reserves the right to cancel, combine, or divide classes; to change the time, date, or location of classes; and to make other changes as necessary to ensure a quality experience for the participants. Classes not meeting the minimum enrollment may be cancelled or combined. If the class is cancelled by the Park District, the Park District will issue a full refund to the participants and inform the instructor and participants of the cancellation. The Park District will work with the Contractor to consult on decisions; however, the final decision will be made by the Park District. Contractors are not reimbursed for any expenses that they may have incurred for the cancelled program.

# *Contractor Expectations*

## ***PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT***

Though they are not employees of the Park Ridge Park District, Independent Contractors do reflect upon the Park District. For some participants, the Independent Contractor is the only Park District representative with whom they will come into contact and are often perceived as Park District employees. Independent Contractors must conduct themselves in a professional manner including dress and speech and should adhere to the information outlined in this guide and in the Independent Contractor Agreement. The Park Ridge Recreation and Park District also expects that all contractors will uphold the Park District's mission to enhance Park Ridge's quality of life by providing park and recreation opportunities for all residents while being environmentally and fiscally responsible. All Contractors must wear a nametag, company shirt and follow the Park District dress code.

## ***CLASS TIMES***

Contractors are responsible for providing instruction for the specified number of hours agreed upon and advertised. If a class is cancelled for any reason, the Park District Program Supervisor will work with the contractor to schedule a make-up class. If a make-up class cannot be arranged, or if a participant cannot attend the make-up class, the participant(s) will be issued a pro-rated refund for the missed class, which will be factored into the determination of the final payment owed to the instructor.

## ***COURSE ENROLLMENT***

Once registration has begun for a class, contractors can check the enrollment number at anytime on the Park District website by contacting the Program Supervisor or the Park District main office. The Program Supervisor assigned to the program will contact the contractor at least five days prior to the start of the class to confirm that the class will run and to send class rosters and attendance worksheets. If a contractor has not heard from a Program Supervisor within this time frame, the contractor should contact the Program Supervisor directly.

## ***CONTACT WITH CLASS PARTICIPANTS***

Participant contact information is provided to contractors in order to allow the contractor to provide good customer service and for safety reasons. This information is personal and should not be shared with anyone, including other participants, parents, other businesses, nor be rented, sold, or used for purposes not specific to the contracted class. For example, using the information to create a mailing list to advertise the contractor's other programs is not allowed.

In the event of an emergency, Contractors will be responsible for contacting class participants. The Park District may be able to assist in this process if calls need to be made quickly.

## ***TAKING ATTENDANCE***

It is the contractor's responsibility to take attendance at each class. This is especially important for large classes where participants may have shown up to class without paying. Please inform individuals who have not paid to visit a Park District facility or website to register. Participants must either be on the roster or have a Park District issued receipt before being admitted to class. Completed attendance sheets must be turned in with the final invoice at the conclusion of the class in order to process a timely payment.

If a participant does not show up for the first class, please give the participant a call to remind him or her of the next class (assuming you have multiple classes). It is the participant's responsibility to remember the classes they

have signed up for, but it is good customer service to contact these participants and could lead to more loyalty and higher participation in the future.

### ***FACILITY & EQUIPMENT USAGE***

Classes are held in various locations throughout Park Ridge (and occasionally outside Park Ridge when a specialized facility is required.) In most circumstances, contractors will be allowed to set up their activity areas 15 minutes prior to the beginning of class activities. The contractor must always leave the activity area in the condition in which it was found. This means cleaning up any materials and restoring any furniture and/or equipment back to its original location after the class ends. In some cases, contractors may be assigned a key to a facility, in which case it is the contractor's responsibility to ensure that the facility is secured and closed properly (doors and windows locked, lights turned off, etc.) before leaving.

Contractors may not use any Park District-owned property, including copy machines, fax machines, computers, materials, and/or equipment without prior written approval of the Park District. Contractors should plan to provide all equipment, materials, and copies at their own expense. If a key or other Park District equipment is issued to the contractor, it must be returned at the end of the program (unless the contractor has a signed contract indicating that the program requiring this key or equipment will be offered again in the following season) or the cost for rekeying the facility or replacing the equipment will be deducted from the final payment to the contractor.

### ***INSTRUCTOR ABSENCES, SUBSTITUTES, OR CANCELLATIONS***

If a contractor is ill or unable to meet with the class, the contractor must notify the assigned Park District Program Supervisor as soon as possible, but no later than one hour prior to the start of the class. Contractors may make arrangements for a substitute. Substitutes must be covered under the contractor's insurance policy and have satisfactorily completed a background check before being allowed to instruct the class. If the substitute has their own insurance coverage, the insurance must meet the same requirements of that of the contractor's insurance and must be provided to and approved by the Park District in advance of the substitution. Contractors may want to submit the substitute's insurance information in advance in order to eliminate any problems due to an unforeseen need for a substitute. As the Independent Contractor Agreement is made with the contractor, the Park District cannot issue any form of payment to the substitute—it is the contractor's responsibility to work out any payment due to the substitute.

### ***PARTICIPANT & INSTRUCTOR SAFETY***

Regardless of the activity, one of an instructor's primary responsibilities is to ensure the safety of participants involved. Instructors should visually inspect the facilities they are working in and equipment they are working with before the start of each activity. Instructors should make themselves familiar with the location and operation of emergency exits, restrooms, first aid kits, and AED machines. If any aspect appears unsafe, the contractor should notify their Program Supervisor and take actions that will ensure participant safety.

Once the activity has ended, the instructor should stay on site until all participants have left. Special care should be taken with minors who should only be released to parents, guardians, or other responsible parties designated by a guardian. Contact numbers are given to all contractors. If there is ever a question as to whether or not a child should be allowed to leave on their own or if someone unfamiliar arrives to pick up a child, the instructor should contact the parent to confirm.

All accidents and incidents, no matter how minor they appear, should be addressed and reported. If an accident occurs in a class, please act calmly, promptly, and efficiently to take care of the situation. If a Park District staff member is on duty at the facility, instructors should request their assistance in providing First Aid (if needed) and completing an Accident/Incident Report. If no employees are present, instructors should do the best within their abilities and training to respond, calling for help from employees, EMS, or police if necessary. After the incident is addressed, the instructor is responsible for reporting it to the Park District on an Accident/Incident Report and submitting the report within 24 hours to the Program Supervisor. Depending on the activity, some instructors may be required to hold special certification such as CPR/First Aid or to show that they have been trained in teaching an activity such as fitness or a sport. This is done to make sure that the instructors are able to safely lead the activity they are being contracted to provide.

The Park Ridge Park District has a strong policy against any form or type of discrimination and harassment by, among, or to its representatives. Discrimination and harassment can be defined as any behavior that is disrespectful and causes discomfort to another person, be it physical, verbal, visual, or sexual. Contractors are responsible for their (and their employees', volunteers', and sub-contractors') own actions/conduct, and must never engage in discrimination and harassment.

### ***PROMOTING YOUR CLASSES***

Independent Contractors are essentially business owners contracting to provide services to the Park Ridge Recreation and Park District. As such, contractors should strive to provide high quality programs and conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times. It's important to keep in mind that the best advertisement a contractor can get for their programs is through "word of mouth" or referrals of past participants.

The Park Ridge Recreation and Park District will place program descriptions in its quarterly Brochures. The descriptions will also be listed on the Park District website. Occasionally the Park District will also select programs to feature in monthly e-newsletters, press releases, flyers, etc. A contractor's assigned Program Supervisor can offer suggestions for other ways to market a contractor's program in the community if needed. Any advertising or marketing developed by the contractor (flyers to be hung or distributed, newspaper advertisements, etc.) must be approved in advance by the Park Ridge Recreation and Park District.

## ***Financial Details***

### ***CLASS FEES***

Independent Contractors set their own prices. They may choose to be paid an hourly rate, a flat rate per participant, or request a percentage of revenue received for the class. Program Supervisors will provide assistance on current market conditions and can negotiate a final rate based on the specific facilities, equipment, supplies, and support that the Park District must provide the contractor for the class to run properly. This final rate will be indicated in the Independent Contractor Agreement. The Park District imposes a non-resident fee to individuals who do not reside in Park Ridge. It also imposes a surcharge of \$1.00 fee for residents and a \$5.00 fee for nonresidents. The surcharge fees are not considered part of the base class fee and contractors will not receive any portion of this resident and nonresident fee in their payment.

### ***SUPPLY FEES***

Any supplies needed for a program are the responsibility of the contractor. If supplies are to be obtained by the participants, it will be the responsibility of the contractor to ensure that this is noted in the contract and program description and that a supply list is provided to the Program Supervisor. If the supplies are to be purchased directly from the instructor, this transaction should take place at the first class meeting. The Park District is not responsible for reimbursing an instructor for any supply fees not paid by a participant. Supply fees not listed in the program description or contract cannot be collected.

### ***PARTICIPANT REFUNDS AND TRANSFERS***

The Park Ridge Recreation and Park District has a Satisfaction Guarantee policy for services your organization provides at the Park District. To receive payment, contractors may select from either of the following options:

- A. At the conclusion of your program(s), submit two separate invoices – one for 80% of total due (it will be processed immediately) and a second invoice for 20% of the total due (it will be processed 12 business days after the conclusion of your class.)
- B. At the conclusion of your programs, submit one invoice for the total amount (it will be processed after 12 business days.)

\*Full payment will not be processed until 12 days after the conclusion of the class.

### ***PAYMENT FOR SERVICES***

Independent Contractors are paid at the conclusion of the session after all services have been rendered (or on a regular calendar set by the Program Supervisor for those contractors who are scheduled on a week-to-week basis such as sport officials). Checks are generally mailed within 30 days of receipt of an invoice and attendance sheets. If a contractor should discover that a participant owes money, the contractor should notify their Program Supervisor so that the issue can be addressed. Any outstanding balances will hold up payment for services, as the Park District cannot pay contractors for monies that the Park District did not collect. Participants who are refunded or are transferred out of the program according to the policies listed above will not be included in the final payment.

### ***STATUS WITH THE PARK DISTRICT***

Contractors must not represent themselves to be employees of the Park District. As contractors are not employees of the Park District, it is important that they understand that they are not entitled to any benefits or protection afforded to Park District employees including, but not limited to unemployment insurance and worker's compensation benefits. Additionally, because they are not employees, they are not bound by any obligations of employees of the Park District. For example, they have sole control over the manner, means and methods of performing the services listed in the Independent Contractor Agreement according to their own judgment. They are able to engage in other business activities outside of the Park District and can also provide similar contracted services to other organizations, provided that those services do not directly compete with the Park Ridge Recreation and Park District. They are also solely responsible for the direction of their own employees and agents. Because of this distinction, it should be understood that contractors are not protected as an employee would be under the provisions of the general liability insurance of the Park District and therefore will be solely responsible for their own actions and omissions and those of their employees, if any. Any injury or property damage on the job will be the contractor's sole responsibility and not that of the Park District. The Park District will not defend contractors against any claim.

***TAXES & DEDUCTIONS***

Because a contractor is not an employee, the Park Ridge Recreation and Park District does not withhold state or federal income tax, Social Security, or other deductions. Under the United States Internal Revenue Code, the Park Ridge Recreation and Park District is required to report the payments made to Independent Contractors each year to the IRS for certain threshold amounts. It is the contractor's responsibility to pay any taxes, withholding, or contributions due on behalf of the contractor (and the contractor's employees, if any) in an appropriate matter.