



## WPCRC Youth Behavior and Suspension Policy

### **PURPOSE**

Warner Park Community Recreation Center (WPCRC) has established this policy to ensure its commitment to creating a positive climate that supports the social and emotional development of youth while providing a safe, inclusive, and welcoming environment for all. We expect all persons using the WPCRC to behave in a responsible way and to respect the rights and dignity of others. A Code of Conduct guides the WPCRC shared expectations and rules of all members of the WPCRC (see appendix A).

The City of Madison Parks Behavioral Policy remains in effect at WPCRC and was consulted in development of the WPCRC Youth Behavior and Suspension Policy. The WPCRC Youth Behavior and Suspension Policy attempts to provide a complimentary process that balances management of a specific parks facility, the unique needs of youth and the mission of the WPCRC. Park Rangers retain the authority to enforce the Parks Behavioral Policy at all times.

When behavior issues with youth occur at the WPCRC, staff will strive to first educate individuals about the applicable code of conduct violation and policies before beginning the suspension process. Minor violations may result in youth being asked to leave the facility for the day. Repeated violations or major violations will result in suspension of membership privileges and possible referral to Restorative Justice. WPCRC supports the use of Restorative Justice and other positive behavior responses when possible. However, if serious, dangerous and/or repeat offenses occur, suspension from WPCRC is necessary to protect the safety of members and guests.

### **RESTORATIVE JUSTICE**

Candidates for Restorative Justice will be referred to an expert practitioner who shall use non-exclusionary discipline responses and alternatives to suspension including but not limited to: mediation and conflict resolution, restorative circles and conversations, community service, and written and verbal apologies. Restorative Justice will be aimed at understanding and addressing the causes of misbehavior, resolving conflicts, meeting individual needs, and exploring ways to keep youth engaged and connected to the WPCRC. Participation in the Restorative Justice process is voluntary. The Suspension Procedure will be followed if the Restorative Justice process is declined, not completed, or unavailable.

### **WPCRC STAFF RESPONSE TO INFRACTIONS**

After staff determine that a person has violated the youth code of conduct, staff will document the incident in the daily logbook and notify the WPCRC Facility Manager. Staff has the authority to ask a person to leave for the day if they feel that is necessary to de-escalate a situation. Staff will call the Park Rangers or Madison Police Department for severe or illegal behaviors or when an individual refuses to leave when told by staff to do so.

If the violation falls under the Suspension Procedure and/or may require a referral to Restorative Justice, the WPCRC Facility manager will determine the course of action. Consequences will be determined on a case-by-case basis. The WPCRC Facility Manager shall have authority to elevate a suspension due to the nature of the offense. Incidents that involve violations of multiple levels shall be calculated based on the highest offense level. Suspensions from the WPCRC shall be calculated from the day of the offense.

The WPCRC Facility Manager will document the reason for and length of any suspension in a letter that is filed at the WPCRC and mailed to the home of record listed in the person's membership file. A copy of the Youth Behavior Report Form and the Behavior and Suspension Policy will also be mailed with the



suspension letter. In the letter, the person will be notified that if they return to the facility during the suspension, they will be trespassing and subject to violation of city ordinance *M.G.O Section 23.07(02)*, punishable by a \$439 forfeiture for the first offense. If the individual does not have accurate contact information on file, the WPCRC Facility Manager will work with appropriate school administrators (if enrolled) or community partners to determine the best way to communicate with the person and/or their guardians. The individual will be given a copy of letter if they return to the center during the suspension. An in-person meeting with the WPCRC Facility Manager is required to discuss behavior report prior to reinstatement of membership privileges.

If misconduct occurs in MSCR or New Bridge programs, staff will notify MSCR Supervisor of Community Programs or New Bridge Fund Development Director, as both organizations may have additional consequences based on their policies and procedures.

## **YOUTH BEHAVIORAL POLICY**

In addition to the conduct contained in the City of Madison Parks Behavioral Policy, youths at WPCRC shall not engage in the behavior listed below, which behavior is categorized based on level of seriousness.

Level 1 violations include:

- Swearing, roasting, verbal harassment, or intimidation by words, gestures or body language;
- Escalating or instigating an argument;
- Unauthorized entry into building to include: card sharing, aiding in providing access to unauthorized users, and leaving/entering through unauthorized exits;
- Influencing or assisting others engaging in disruptive behavior;
- Failure to follow staff directions;
- Soliciting, gambling, panhandling, littering, or loitering; and,
- Evading communication or disciplinary action.

Level 2 violations include:

- Play fighting;
- Bullying, engaging in any physically intimidating or assaultive behavior;
- Use of tobacco or nicotine products, including e-cigarettes (juuling and vaping);
- Viewing obscene or pornographic materials;
- Inappropriate use of a cell phone in bathrooms or locker rooms; and,
- Making, transmitting, and distributing, including posting to the internet, any recording of fights at WPCRC, including play fighting.

Level 3 violations include:

- Fighting or physical contact with another person in an aggressive or threatening way;
- Theft, vandalism, or behavior that results in the destruction or loss of property;
- Possession of a weapon of any kind;
- Possessing, selling, distributing, consuming, or suspicion of being under the influence any alcoholic beverage or controlled substance;
- Any activity or behavior that is against the law;
- Inappropriate protected class references;
- Use of racial slurs;
- Disrespecting, swearing, or threatening conduct or speech towards staff;
- Sexual contact including explicit conversations, kissing, or inappropriate touching of someone's private areas; and,



- Trespassing by entering or remaining on WPCRC premises after having been notified by an authorized individual not to do so, and entering or remaining on WPCRC premises during the period in which an individual has been suspended from the premise.

### **SUSPENSION LEVELS**

Persons violating the youth behavioral policy shall be subject to the following suspensions, based on the category of violation:

- Level 1 Violation: Up to a two (2) week suspension from WPCRC.
- Level 2 Violation: Up to a three (3) month suspension from WPCRC.
- Level 3 Violation: Up to a one (1) year suspension from WPCRC.

### **REDUCTION IN SUSPENSIONS**

The length of any suspension imposed under this policy may be reduced or replaced with a corrective action plan that may include Restorative Justice or other measures. The corrective action plan can reduce the suspension up to an anticipated 50% of the initial suspension. Engaging in Restorative Justice is one example of a process to allow for the reduction or replacement of suspension time. Alternatively, suspensions may be reduced if a mentor from an approved youth services organization supervises individual while in the WPCRC facility. All plans to reduce suspensions require an in-person meeting with the WPCRC Facility Manager.

### **REPORTING TO PARKS SUPERINTENDENT AND WPCRC ADVISORY SUBCOMMITTEE**

The WPCRC Facility Manager will send to the Parks Superintendent or his/her designee a copy of any suspension notice letters and corrective action plans that are issued. A summary report of suspension and corrective action plans currently in place will be presented at each WPCRC Advisory Subcommittee. Names of youth will be removed from the report given to the WPCRC Advisory Subcommittee in order to maintain privacy.

### **APPEAL PROCEDURE**

A person may appeal any suspension under this policy by submitting in writing, through a letter or email, an explanation describing their request for an appeal. Upon a written request filed by the suspended person with the Parks Superintendent prior to the expiration of the suspension period, the Parks Superintendent will review the decision to suspend an individual and the terms thereof, and may uphold, rescind or modify the length and scope of the suspension based upon the information presented by staff and submitted by the individual. A person may only file one appeal of a suspension. The Parks Superintendent must respond to the request within thirty (30) days of the filing of the request. The Parks Superintendent shall notify the suspended individual in writing about the decision to uphold, rescind or modify the ban and specify the reasons for this decision. Written appeals should be sent to 210 Martin Luther King Jr., Blvd., Room 104, Madison, WI 53703, or e-mailed to parks@cityofmadison.com.

The Parks Superintendent shall also notify the suspended individual that they may appeal the determination of the Parks Superintendent to the WPCRC Advisory Subcommittee by filing a written request with the City Clerk within ten (10) days of the issuance of the Superintendent's decision. Any appeal so requested shall be heard by the Subcommittee at the next scheduled meeting, unless the appeal is filed within five (5) business days of the next meeting in which case it shall be heard at the following meeting. After considering the evidence presented, the Subcommittee shall either uphold, rescind or modify the terms and conditions of the suspension. A person's failure to appear at the Subcommittee shall constitute a withdrawal of the appeal.



### **HABITUAL TRUANCY**

Wisconsin State Statute requires compulsory school attendance and defines Habitual Truancy as “a pupil who is absent without an acceptable excuse for part or all of 5 or more days on which school is held during the school semester.”

During the Madison Metropolitan School District school year (September-June), WPCRC will support youth in attending school by notifying parents and/or schools if a youth is in the facility during school hours unless for an approved school district out of school day, early release or school sponsored activity. Additionally, facility access will be restricted for students 14 years of age and under at 7:30pm on school nights unless participating in an organized community program or approved by Facility Manager.

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