



VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Lewiston, Maine is a growing city full of possibility. Vibrant and culturally diverse with a strong sense of community, Lewiston delivers affordable, accessible and abundant opportunity. Support the growth of a healthy Lewiston through recreation programs, special events, and Community Connections. This is your opportunity to Volunteer Forward.



Champions: For the Shirt



Volunteer Forward
Project



Lewiston Volunteer Forward

The Lewiston Recreation Department appreciates your willingness to join our mission of creating a healthy and involved community using the connections made between all its members.

About Lewiston

Lewiston is committed to being a community of excellence. Positioned in the global community, it is a place of pride, aspiration, diversity, engagement, and accomplishment—in short, a civil society. Geographically the city of Lewiston is situated centrally in Androscoggin County along the east shore of the Androscoggin River. The population of Lewiston is approximately 36,000 with more than 350 community members being employed by the city of Lewiston as well as upwards of 60 Lewiston Recreation volunteers.

Lewiston Recreation Department (LRD) Mission

Support the growth of a healthy Lewiston through recreation programs, special events and community connections. The Lewiston Volunteer Forward program aims to strengthen our community by:

- Creating a culture of community engagement developed through communication and agreement, shared decision making and empowerment.
- Encourage the community to participate in a volunteer capacity to enhance recreational opportunities and programs.

THE VOLUNTEER

Lewiston Recreation Department and the Volunteer Forward Project are committed to establishing a clear understanding of expectations for volunteers. Those expectations, defined below, are an extension of the high level of commitment LRD offers to its volunteers.

Definition of a volunteer

A volunteer is someone who willingly commits their time, talents, and services to the city of Lewiston community members to expand on the mission of creating a healthy community through connections and high-quality programs for all ages.

Importance of a volunteer

The objective of the LRD Volunteer Forward concept is to encourage the volunteer to feel like part of the team of staff and together to support the City of Lewiston towards its goals. Through this collaborative

engagement, the vision is to recruit and encourage others to volunteer and improve upon all that LRD has to offer.

Volunteers:

- Bring new energy and perspective.
- Offer their unique skills and abilities.
- Take on assigned tasks.
- Increase the quality and quantity of programs.
- Offer diversity of backgrounds and experiences.
- Provide community involvement opportunities.
- Promote quality recreation opportunities and activities for all ages.

BECOMING A VOLUNTEER

Volunteers must complete an application, interview, background check, and training. Steps are outlined below:

1. Application

Interested individuals will be asked to apply using the City's website or paper application. Upon reviewing a person's application, Volunteer Forward of Lewiston will reach out to the applicant and invite them to an interview.

2. Interview

At the interview, Lewiston staff will assess the experience and talents of the applicant to assist with the best placement. The talent assessment is the perfect place to:

- Discuss the potential volunteer's interest in volunteering.
- Share skills and talents.
- Go over availability.
- Review open opportunities.
- Review the position and program description.

3. Background Check

To ensure the safety of the community we serve as well as current volunteers, all potential volunteers must complete a background check.

4. Training

Volunteers will assist and collaborate cohesively with LRD employees. It is important for volunteers to ask questions about previous programs and activities. Volunteers are encouraged to shadow current volunteers or employees to better understand what brings success to respective programs.

VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES & CITY POLICIES

LRD feels strongly that volunteers can reach their goals while simultaneously enhancing the experience for all community members. The following are some parameters that have been set to help establish and sustain such a relationship.

Lewiston Recreation Department - Volunteer Forward Project Agreement

Upon accepting a volunteer role with LRD - VFP, volunteers will sign a “Lewiston Volunteer Forward Agreement” which will ask volunteers to accept the terms outlined by the following items:

- Data Practices Guidelines These guidelines are outlined in this volunteer handbook.
- Harassment Prevention and Respectful Workplace Policy This policy in its entirety is included in this volunteer handbook.
- Volunteer Handbook Volunteers will affirm they have received, will read and will abide by the handbook.

Values – Integrity / Quality / Service (IQS)

As a volunteer for the LRD, you directly affect the residents and the community. Volunteers must exhibit conduct that is above all ethical, professional, responsive, and of standards of a city volunteer. The City of Lewiston is committed to providing services for its community with the highest Integrity, Quality and Service.

- Be accessible by: - Collaborating with LRD coordinators - communicating schedule of availability.
- We welcome by: - Smiling and greeting others - Introducing ourselves - Being polite and positive to all.
- There are two halves to communicating, we must always be: - Listening carefully before responding - Asking clarifying questions - Displaying empathy for other’s concerns.
- Demonstrate accountability by: - Taking responsibility for requests or concerns - Doing what we say we are going to do, and follow-up.
- Strive to exceed expectations by: - Offering solutions and educating others - Looking for opportunities to go above and beyond.
- We project professionalism by: - Wearing City issued apparel - Keeping work areas clean - Wearing appropriate attire for our role.

Inappropriate Conduct

Volunteers will always conduct themselves, both on and off duty, in such a manner that reflects favorably on LRD and the City of Lewiston. Inappropriate conduct is defined as any intentional act or omission by the volunteer that impairs the operation and efficiency of the department or its employees or wrongfully brings discredit to the city and department in which the volunteer is volunteering. Inappropriate conduct is grounds for dismissal.

Harassment Prevention and Respectful Workplace

The following is the Harassment Prevention and Respectful Workplace policy. Volunteers are required to follow this policy and this expectation is communicated to all potential volunteers.

Purpose

It is the policy of the City of Lewiston and LRD that harassment based on any legally protected status (race, creed, color, religion, sex, national origin, marital status, status regarding public assistance, disability, age, membership on a local human rights commission and sexual orientation), including sexual harassment, is prohibited.

In addition, LRD strives to maintain a respectful workplace and public service environment that is free from violence, discrimination and other offensive behavior. Such behavior can create an offensive work environment, adversely affect positive working relationships and decrease productivity. Maintaining a respectful and safe work environment is a shared responsibility of management, employees and volunteers.

POLICY STATEMENT

No LRD - employee or VFP - volunteer shall engage in verbal or physical conduct that is threatening, hostile or discriminatory toward an individual because of the person's race, creed, color, religion, sex, national origin, marital status, status regarding public assistance, disability, age, membership on a local human rights commission, sexual orientation, or any other legally protected class. Furthermore, this conduct is illegal if the conduct:

- Has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with the person's work performance.
- Or otherwise adversely affects that person's employment opportunities.

Examples of prohibited harassment include (please note these are not the only examples):

- Epithets, slurs, negative stereotypes or intimidating or hostile acts, or words that relate to the person's race, creed, color, religion, sex, national origin, marital status, status regarding public assistance, disability, age, membership on a local human rights commission or sexual orientation; and
- Written or graphic material that is threatening or hostile to the person, that is posted or circulated on City of Lewiston property, and that relates to that person's race, creed, color, religion, sex, national origin, marital status, status regarding public assistance, disability, age, membership on a local human rights commission or sexual orientation.

Sexual harassment is defined as:

- Making unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature a condition of a volunteer obtaining standing or continuing standing; or
- Making submission to or rejection of such conduct the basis for volunteer standing decisions affecting a volunteer; or
- Creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment, or otherwise substantially interfering with an individual's employment or volunteer position by such conduct; or
- Retaliating against an employee or volunteer for complaining about such conduct.

Examples of discriminatory, violent, and other offensive behavior include (please note these are not the only examples):

- Discriminatory behavior may include inappropriate or unwelcome remarks about, or conduct related to, a person's race, creed, color, religion, sex, national origin, marital status, status regarding public assistance, disability, age, membership on a local human rights commission or sexual orientation.
- Violent behavior may include the use of physical force, threats of force, intimidation or the abuse of power or authority to cause fear or harm.
- Other offensive behavior may include unwelcome or inappropriate work-related behavior such as angry outbursts, viewing or displaying pornographic materials, inappropriate joking, vulgar obscenities, name-calling, disrespectful language or bullying.

COMPLAINTS / PENALTIES

If a volunteer believes they have been subject to harassment, violent or discriminatory behavior prohibited by this policy they should report the incident immediately to their direct coordinator who will then follow City protocols for further investigation.

The volunteer or employee making the complaint may be asked to put the facts, including the names of any witnesses, relating to the offensive conduct or communication in writing. The City will undertake an objective investigation of the allegations at issue. All complaints will be investigated to the extent deemed appropriate based on the nature of the complaint. The investigation may include interviews, all interviewees regardless of volunteer/employee/community member status, will be advised to maintain the confidentiality of the content of the interview.

Determination of discipline or other corrective action will be made on a case-by-case basis, depending upon the circumstances of the matter, including the type of harassment or misconduct alleged, the context in which the alleged acts or statements occurred, and any other facts deemed relevant. The party making the complaint will be advised of the final disposition of the matter.

A violation of this policy may be grounds for immediate discipline, up to and including termination, or other appropriate action. Discipline, if any, will be determined on a case-by-case basis, after a review of relevant information.

Retaliation against any person who complains, reports, or participates in an investigation of harassment or other misconduct is strictly prohibited.

Contact Human Resources for questions regarding this policy.

Conflict of Interest

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

LRD has an obligation to operate in the best interests of our City of Lewiston residents and non-resident patrons as well. It is expected that all VFP - volunteers will exercise good judgment in avoiding outside activities or situations where conflicts of interests with LRD business exist or could be perceived to exist.

If you have an affiliation or financial interest with an organization that may present a conflict with those interests, disclose that conflict to LRD staff immediately. Refrain from being involved in any decision-making process relating to the other organization.

Gifts

Do not accept any gifts from citizens or businesses. If community members are looking to donate to the Lewiston Recreation Department to support programming, please have them call the office at 207-513-3005.

Data Practices Guidelines

Occasionally volunteers may have access to non-public information. If volunteers whose job responsibilities require them to have access, they must:

- Not discuss, disclose or otherwise release the data.
- Not leave data where non-authorized individuals might see it.
- Not destroy or shred data unless specifically authorized by their coordinator.

Examples of data that may be nonpublic, confidential or protected nonpublic could include:

- Addresses
- Phone numbers and/or email.
- Participant medical information
- Public safety information Volunteers must pay careful attention to and abide by the City's Data Practice's Policy. If a volunteer has a question about data and it is public vs nonpublic status, check with the volunteer director coordinator.

Time Records

Volunteers are responsible for keeping track of their own hours, including those given off-site. LRD representative will sign off on forms as requested.

Documenting your hours is valuable for many reasons:

- Recognition.
- Tax deductions.
- Reference purposes.
- Statistical records (Future funding for programs are often dependent on accurate recordkeeping.)
- School or educational credit.

Scheduling

If there is a conflict with your assigned schedule, please notify your coordinator or Lewiston Recreation Staff as far in advance as possible.

Dress Code/Identification

As a volunteer, you should dress according to the needs of your job and be well groomed. Although our clothing needs are diverse within the organization, please follow these guidelines:

- Clothing, especially sweatshirts and T-shirts, with inappropriate messages or symbols should not be worn. Inappropriate messages include those advertising alcoholic beverages, bars or restaurants, former employers, other business establishments and offensive language.
- Volunteers Should wear clothing appropriate for their designated duties of the day.

If you are issued an ID badge, nametag or t-shirt identifying you as a volunteer please wear it while volunteering.

Media Relations

In the interest of providing the media with accurate information, volunteers are asked to adhere to the following:

If a volunteer is contacted by a media representative for an interview regarding their volunteer activities, the volunteer must notify their coordinator first and arrange with the City of Lewiston marketing and communications team. Team interviews with City staff are strongly encouraged since this will ensure that the media representative is provided both with accurate information about the volunteer's activities and technical information about City policies and programs. It is important to remember that volunteers only address questions about their volunteer activities.

Questions about City programs and policies should be referred to the appropriate staff person. In any media situation, individuals must identify themselves as volunteers.

Social Media

Social media can be a useful tool when used appropriately, but it also needs to be used with caution. If you mention that you are a LRD Volunteer Forward Team member on a social media page, please be respectful and keep in mind that almost anything on the Internet can be accessed by the public.

Sharing pictures / videos of events and their participants especially those involving minors should be first filtered through the City of Lewiston social media accounts for approval prior to sharing on personal accounts. Shares and likes are a great way to create awareness of current and upcoming programs.

Drug Free / Smoke Free / Alcohol Free Workplace

It is the policy of the City of Lewiston to provide a drug-free environment. The LRD's goal is to establish and maintain a healthy and efficient workforce / Volunteer-team **free** from the effects of drug / alcohol abuse. This policy follows the requirements of the Federal Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988 and applicable state law. Additionally, all City facilities and City-owned vehicles are designated as "smoke-

free,” meaning that all LRD employees and likewise it’s Volunteers are prohibited from using cigarettes, e-cigarettes, cigars, pipes, chewing tobacco, snuff, other tobacco or drug products in those areas.

Firearms

Possession or use of a dangerous weapon is prohibited by LRD volunteers on City property, in City vehicles, or in any personal vehicle which is used for City business.

Workplace Safety

Volunteer personal safety is important to us. LRD never wants to put volunteers in harm’s way. If the volunteer feels the situation is unsafe in any way, the volunteer should move away from the danger to a safe space. Volunteer coordinators are expected to educate and enforce the safety rules with volunteers. Volunteers should receive training before using equipment they don’t have prior experience with. Please request this training. Safety is everyone’s responsibility.

Accidents or injuries while volunteering

If an accident or injury occurs while volunteering, it must be reported immediately to their direct coordinator (or as soon as reasonably possible if it is a medical emergency). The coordinator will complete a written report to include all relevant details.

If the volunteer-related injury requires medical treatment, the volunteer will be directed to seek medical attention at a facility of the City’s choosing. In the event of a medical emergency, the volunteer should seek treatment immediately at the nearest and most appropriate medical center.

Ending your volunteer assignment

If an individual decides they no longer want to volunteer for Lewiston Recreation Department and the Volunteer Forward Project, they should communicate this with their coordinator and the Lewiston staff with as much advance notice as possible. All City property, such as identification badges, keys, etc. must be returned at that time. The City of Lewiston accepts the services of all volunteers with the understanding that such service is at the sole discretion of the City. At any time and for whatever reason, the City of Lewiston may decide to end a volunteer relationship.

The City of Lewiston and the “Volunteer Forward” project strives to create a great environment for volunteers and employees to perform cohesively at their highest level of excellence. This is possible through great communication and being committed to the establishment of a better today for the community of tomorrow. The involvement and fulfillment of each volunteer is equally important as the satisfaction of the program participants to ensure that we create and maintain the Volunteer Forward Project. Always be the best “You” and **Together** we will move **Forward!**

City of Lewiston Volunteer Forward Agreement

Volunteers are required to sign the volunteer agreement for the Volunteer handbook.

The agreement states that the volunteer agrees to abide by the procedures outlined in the Volunteer Handbook.

I _____ agree to abide by the procedures outlined in the volunteer handbook while volunteering at the City of Lewiston.

I further acknowledge and agree that while volunteering for the City of Lewiston I will not be an agent, servant or employee of the city, will not be entitled to any wages or compensation of any sort, and will not be covered by the city's employee benefits, including worker's compensation. Further, nothing in the Volunteer Handbook shall be construed to create an employment relationship of any nature whatsoever, nor does the relationship qualify for court-ordered community service.

Signature

Date