



## Inclusion Request Policy and Procedure (Approved 02/04/2020)

All patrons are required to create an account prior to registering for any program. The online registration process allows the patron to inform the Chicago Park District if a participant has a disability. As the patron creates the account, if requesting specific modifications or an Inclusion Aide, they must specify under the "Answer/Edit Account Questions" section exactly what they are requesting. If a patron is requesting an Inclusion Aide, it is imperative that the patron also informs the specific park supervisor where the program is taking place.

In turn, the Park Supervisor will contact the Special Recreation Inclusion Team (SRIT) regarding the request and complete the necessary internal paperwork. The SRIT will be in contact with the family upon receipt of the paperwork to set up an individualized assessment, at which time a modifications/Inclusion Aide determination will be made. It is important to be aware that a participant **may not** attend the program until the individualized assessment has been completed.

Through the assessment, one of two outcomes will occur. If an Aide is deemed necessary for the participant's successful participation, the SRIT will work with Human Resources to hire/place a qualified staff member. The participant shall not start the program until an appropriate Aide is assigned. If the assessment determines that an Aide **is not** needed, the SRIT will communicate with park staff regarding any other program modification needs. The goal is to ensure that the participant starts the program as quickly as possible within the most independent and inclusive setting. Pertinent participant information will be shared with direct program staff in both situations. In order to properly evaluate a program modifications/Aide request, a reasonable time period must be allotted for the process to occur.

Participants **must** register at the start of the registration time frame, and parents/guardians must notify the park of the request at that time. To provide the best service and experience possible, the SRIT needs time to match an Aide with the appropriate skill-set and availability for each participant citywide. Aides are placed on a first-come, first-served basis in the order in which registrations/requests are received; an Inclusion Aide request does not guarantee an Aide. If the Park District is unable to assign a needed Aide due to a participant's late registration, staff unavailability or the lack of a required skill-set, then a refund will be issued. Due to the high volume of Aide requests citywide, the same Aide assignment cannot be guaranteed from session to session.

Participants who have been assigned an Inclusion Aide are expected to have the ability and willingness to participate in all group activities, as well as understand and follow the program rules with Aide assistance. All participants need to have the capability to conduct themselves safely and appropriately within a group setting, and successfully transition from one activity to another with Aide assistance. A modification cannot be provided that fundamentally alters the nature of the program.

### Attendance Guidelines:

- If the assigned Aide is unable to work due to an emergency or illness, every effort will be made to place an appropriate and available substitute. The participant will not be able to attend the program if a substitute is not available.
- If a participant is going to be absent, parents/guardians are expected to contact the SRIT of every absence.
- If the participant is absent from a program three times during a single session, the Aide will be removed and re-assigned to a participant who is waiting for support in another program. This results in an immediate discontinuation of participation for the "absent participant" throughout the remainder of the session.

Please Note: Inclusion Aides will not be provided for non-structured/non-registered programs (e.g. drop-in camp, open gym, family programs).

Confirmation that the request was received will be communicated to parents within two weeks of each registration by SRIT. For any inquiries, please contact Special Recreation at [special.recreation@chicagoparkdistrict.com](mailto:special.recreation@chicagoparkdistrict.com)

Emily Verrilli-Hays, CTRS | Special Recreation Asst. Mgr. – Inclusion | [emily.hays@chicagoparkdistrict.com](mailto:emily.hays@chicagoparkdistrict.com)

Michelle LoCoco, CTRS | Special Recreation Manager

### Administration Office

541 North Fairbanks  
Chicago, Illinois 60611  
(312) 742-7529  
(312) 747-2001 (TTY)  
[www.chicagoparkdistrict.com](http://www.chicagoparkdistrict.com)

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