

# PARK DISTRICT OF OAK PARK INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR GUIDE



**PARK DISTRICT**  
of OAK PARK

218 Madison Street  
Oak Park, IL 60302  
[www.pdop.org](http://www.pdop.org)  
708-725-2000

# Introduction

## WELCOME

The Park District of Oak Park is a progressive municipal agency committed to improving the lives of our residents by providing quality parks and recreation experiences for our community. As such we are always on the lookout for exciting new recreation programs to offer to our community. As our mission indicates, we always look forward to the possibility of working with others to reach our common goals and serve the community.

This guide was created in order to allow potential instructors to acquaint themselves with the Park District and the process of becoming an Independent Contractor for the Park District of Oak Park. It is also designed to serve as a resource for current Independent Contractors on Park District expectations for its instructors.

## WHAT CAN THE PARK DISTRICT OFFER CONTRACTORS?

Teaching a class at the Park District of Oak Park 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 our Program Guide which is mailed out to all Oak Park residents four times a year. All class information is also available 24 hours a day on our website and we are able to provide a direct link to contractors' programs so that they can market their programs from their own website. Often classes are also featured in other marketing avenues such as a monthly e-newsletter, press releases to local newspapers, and flyers sent to students of Oak Park public schools.
- The Park District uses an advanced registration system that allows us 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.
- 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, or 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 our classes and offering contractors the opportunity to attract participants outside of Oak Park as well. Residents receive a two week priority registration period after which registration is opened to non-residents.
- Independent Contractors for the Park District of Oak Park benefit by being affiliated with an organization with nearly 100 years of rich history and a positive reputation in the Oak Park community.

## QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS GUIDE

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

Park District of Oak Park, 218 Madison St, Oak Park, Illinois 60302  
(708) 725-2000  
[www.pdop.org](http://www.pdop.org)

# *Becoming an Independent Contractor*

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

In order to become an Independent Contractor for the Park District of Oak Park, a potential contractor must first submit a Program Proposal (included in this guide) for each proposed course. Proposals should be returned to the Park District of Oak Park at 218 Madison Street, Oak Park, Illinois 60302 and are accepted year round. Incomplete or illegible proposals will not be considered.

Once a proposal has been submitted, a Program Supervisor in the Recreation Department will review the document and notify the potential Independent Contractor if they 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 they have 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 automatically 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 District of Oak Park. Once approved, you will enter into an Independent Contractor Agreement with the Park District.

### **Items Required for Approval as an Independent Contractor**

- IRS W-9 Form
- A certificate of insurance with the Park District of Oak Park listed as the certificate holder as well as an additional insured with respect to general liability. An endorsement naming the Park District of Oak Park, its officers, officials, employees, and volunteers must accompany the certificate of insurance (often referred to as page CG 2011). If the contractor has employees, proof of worker's compensation and employer's liability is required. 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.
- 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 two years. This can be done through the Park District of Oak Park or contractors can provide an affidavit stating 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 final invoice

# Activity Information

## REGISTRATION

The Park District of Oak Park 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. Except during the initial lottery period, when all Oak Park residents will have an equal chance of receiving a spot in a class, all registrations are processed on a first come first serve 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 done 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 our 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:

<b>Program Season:</b>	<b>Program Information Due:</b>	<b>Programs Take Place:</b>
Winter	August	January-March
Spring (includes summer camps)	November	April-May
Summer	January	June-August
Fall (includes holiday programs)	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.

The Park District of Oak Park observes the following holidays: New Year's Day, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the following Friday, Christmas Eve (afternoon & evening only) and Christmas Day. The Park District also tries to avoid starting or ending programs on holidays of any major religion out of the impact that it could have on participants' ability to fully enjoy the program that they have registered for. Please keep in mind that these holidays (as well as other holidays or institute dates for those programs taking place in a public school) may affect class schedules.

## CHANGES TO CLASSES

Although the Park District strives to give contract 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. Contractors are not reimbursed for any expenses that they may have incurred for the cancelled program.

# *Contractor Expectations*

## **PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

Though not employees of the Park District of Oak Park, Independent Contractors do represent the Park District. For some participants, the Independent Contractor is the only Park District representative with whom they will come into contact with. Independent Contractors must conduct themselves in a professional manner including dress and speech and should support the information outlined in this guide and in the Independent Contractor Agreement. The Park District of Oak Park also expects that all contractors will uphold the mission and values of the Park District (listed on the back of the front cover of this guide).

## **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 request registration updates through their assigned Program Supervisor. The Program Supervisor 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, etc., 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 services is not allowed.

Contractors should contact all participants via e-mail or a phone call prior to the start of class as a courtesy. This is a good time for contractors to introduce themselves and remind participants of any supply requirements and of the date, time, and location of the classes.

## **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 the Park District office 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 them 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's 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 Oak Park (and occasionally outside Oak Park 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 replacing any furniture and/or equipment back in 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 contracted program, or the cost for rekeying the facility or replacing the equipment will be deducted from the final invoice. (unless the contractor has a signed contract indicating that the program requiring this key or equipment will be offered again in the following season).

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

If a contractor is ill or unable to meet with their class, the contractor must notify their 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, it 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 unless the facility has a Park District staff member present serving as a facility attendant that is able to accept the responsibility. 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, ambulance, 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 it within 24 hours to the Program Supervisor. Depending on the activity, some instructors may be required to hold special certifications 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 District of Oak Park 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 services to the Park District of Oak Park. 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 District of Oak Park will place program descriptions in our quarterly Program Guide. The descriptions will also be listed on the Park District website. The Park District is able to create a custom address that links directly to a contractor's program that can be used on the contractor's 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 programs 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 District of Oak Park.

## *Financial Details*

### **CLASS FEES**

Independent Contractors ultimately set their own prices. They may prefer 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 Oak Park. These fees are not considered part of the base class fee and contractors will not receive any portion of this non-resident 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 and contract cannot be collected.

## **PARTICIPANT REFUNDS AND TRANSFERS**

The Park District's refund policies applies to all programs offered through the Park District, including those offered by a contractor. Unless otherwise noted, refunds must be requested before a program meets for the second time or no refund will be issued. In the case of swimming and ice-skating lessons, a one-week notice is required. Requests for refunds for one-day programs, trips, and summer camps require a two-week notice. After these times, refunds are usually granted only if the vacated spot can be filled by a wait-listed participant. If a participant is unsatisfied with a program, the Park District attempts to work with the participant to find a suitable alternative. However, in certain cases, when an alternative is not available or if the participant is not able to attend the program at no fault of their own (such as a medical issue), a refund may be granted. The ultimate decision on whether or not to refund a participant is up to the discretion of the Program Supervisor or higher level management at the Park District. Contractors are not paid for participants who are granted refunds (but may be paid a pro-rated amount for those given a partial refund), who transfer to a different program not offered by the contractor, or who do not attend the program.

## **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 we 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 present themselves as 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 protections afforded to Park District employees including, but not limited to unemployment insurance and worker's compensation. However, because they are not employees, they are also 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 District of Oak Park. 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 under the provisions of the general liability insurance of the Park District and

therefore will be solely responsible for their own actions. Any injury or property damage on the job will be the contractor's sole responsibility and not the Park District's. The Park District will in no way defend contractors in matters of liability.

## **TAXES & DEDUCTIONS**

Because a contractor is not an employee, the Park District of Oak Park does not withhold state or federal income tax, Social Security, or other deductions. Under the United States Internal Revenue Code, the Park District of Oak Park is required to report the payments made to Independent Contractors each year to the IRS for certain threshold amounts. Because contractors are business owners, they may have the ability to claim tax deductions for ordinary necessary business expenses which are directly connected with providing the contracted service to the Park District. It is the contractor's responsibility to satisfy any taxes, withholdings, or contributions due on behalf of the contractor (and the contractor's employees, if any) in an appropriate matter. Contractors are encouraged to contact a professional tax advisor with any questions about any information in this guide and how it would apply to each contractor's individual circumstances.

# Park District of Oak Park Program Proposal

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Main Representative Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Owner Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City, State, ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Website: \_\_\_\_\_

## PROGRAM DETAILS

Program Title: \_\_\_\_\_

### Age of Participants:

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Preschool (Ages 3-5) | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth (Ages 5-11)    | <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Teen (Ages 11-13)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teen (Ages 12-18)    | <input type="checkbox"/> Adult (Ages 18 & up) | <input type="checkbox"/> Seniors (Ages 60 & up) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> All Ages             | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____         |   |

### Facility Needed:

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Multi-purpose Room | <input type="checkbox"/> Fitness/Dance Room | <input type="checkbox"/> Gym                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Swimming Pool      | <input type="checkbox"/> Sports Arena       | <input type="checkbox"/> Ice Rink            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor Court      | <input type="checkbox"/> Park/Field         | <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Facility |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____       |   |  |

### Program Length:

# Classes/Session? \_\_\_\_\_ # Days/Week? \_\_\_\_\_ # Hours/Class? \_\_\_\_\_

Suggested day(s) and time the program should meet: \_\_\_\_\_

Second Choice of day(s) and time: \_\_\_\_\_

Recommended Minimum Number of Students: \_\_\_\_\_ Maximum Number of Students: \_\_\_\_\_

What is the requested rate of pay for the contractor for this program? \_\_\_\_\_

*(May be negotiated based on the specific facilities, equipment, supplies, and support that the Park District must provide the contractor for the class to run properly.)*

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Please provide a brief description to be used in flyers and brochures:

---

---

---

Please list the benefits that this program will provide to its participants:

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide an outline or lesson plan that gives specific details for the program including activities planned and skills targeted.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

\_\_\_\_\_ (If more space is needed, attach additional pages or use the back of this form.)

What can be done to adapt this program to persons with disabilities?

---

---

**EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIES**

What equipment and/or supplies will be provided by the contractor? (The contractor is responsible for ensuring that all non-park district equipment and supplies used for the program meets current safety and industry standards/guidelines and is in proper working condition.)

---

---

What equipment and/or supplies will the Park District of Oak Park need to provide for this program (including tables, chairs, audio-visual equipment, screens, hoops, goals, etc.)?

---

---

What will the participants be required to bring? And in the case of special program materials, how much does each item cost? (include required clothing, program materials, lunch, water, etc.)

---

---

**SAFETY & EMERGENCY FACTORS**

To provide the best possible experience for the participant, an awareness of potential hazards & and risks is required. The instructor is responsible for informing the Park District of Oak Park and the participants of risks involved with participation and/or use of equipment and supplies. List any safety, health, and risk factors for this program and how this information will be presented to participants.

---

---

If this class is to take place outside, what action will be taken in the case of inclement weather?

---

---

---

**INSTRUCTOR QUALIFICATIONS**

Contractors are responsible for ensuring that all instructors have and maintain the appropriate qualifications and certification for program success and safety. Please list qualifications, certifications, and experience that makes the instructor qualified to lead this program.

---

---

---

Is the instructor certified in any of the following (please check all that apply)?

- First Aid
- CPR
- AED

**REFERENCES**

Please give references of organizations where you have offered this program (or similar programs if this is a new program) in the past two years.

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person & Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Month & Year Program Was Last Offered: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person & Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Month & Year Program Was Last Offered: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person & Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Month & Year Program Was Last Offered: \_\_\_\_\_

**VERIFICATION OF INFORMATION STATEMENT**

I agree that the statements and information provided in this document are true and correct. I will notify the Park District of Oak Park in writing of any changes to information in this document. I understand that I may need to provide verification of information/certifications mentioned in this document.

I also understand that in certain situations, contractors may be subject to one or more of the following background checks:

- Illinois State and/or FBI criminal background checks
  - Reference checks
  - Insurable driving record checks
  - Current Illinois State Driver's License/Endorsement check
- (If your program is selected, your Program Supervisor will clarify any questions on these.)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**