

# **LANCASTER COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & RECREATION RULES AND REGULATIONS**

**Pursuant to Ordinance No. 152 of 2022, as amended by Ordinance No. 153 of 2022, the Board of Commissioners of Lancaster County have enacted the following rules and regulations governing the use of the Lancaster County Park System:**

## **PURPOSE**

These regulations are established to govern the conduct of the members of the public in parks and recreational facilities established and maintained by Lancaster County Department of Parks and Recreation and to protect the public property.

## **DEFINITIONS**

Except where the context clearly indicates otherwise, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

- A. The term "County" shall mean the County of Lancaster.
- B. The term "Park System" shall mean any parks, buildings, and other properties owned or leased by the County of Lancaster, including but not limited to those designated or used by the County for park or open space purposes.
- C. The term "Park Ranger" shall mean any employee in the Park Ranger Division of the Department who has been authorized to enforce the Lancaster County Department of Parks & Recreation Rules and Regulations within the Park System.
- D. The term "Department" shall mean the Lancaster County Department of Parks and Recreation.
- E. The term "Administrator" shall mean the Administrator for the Lancaster County Parks and Recreation Department as designated by the Lancaster County Commissioners.

## **HOURS**

- A. The Park System and recreational facilities established, maintained, and operated by the Department is open to all members of the public, unless posted or designated otherwise.
- B. The Park System shall be open to the public between the hours of sunrise to sunset each day unless different hours are established by general or specific notification made by the Administrator. The lighted athletic fields in Central Park shall be available for use until 10:00 p.m. each day unless otherwise established by the Administrator.
- C. Any section or part of any park or recreational facility may be declared closed to the public by the Administrator at any time and for any interval of time, either temporarily or at regular and stated intervals and either entirely or for certain uses, as the Administrator shall find necessary. Any aggrieved party may appeal to the Administrator in writing within ten (10) business days of the Administrator's declaration.

## **PERMITS**

Permits are required for the following purposes:

- A. Use of recreational buildings, pavilions, and camping grounds.
- B. Use of athletic fields.
- C. To reserve any area in the Park System for use.
- D. An event or activity which 50 or more people are expected to attend.
- E. Any other purpose as set forth in these rules and regulations.

## **APPLICATION FOR PERMITS**

- A. Any person or association of persons desiring to obtain a permit shall make request at the office of the Department either in person or by telephone.
- B. When a fee is required, permits will not be issued until payment is received. The Administrator may make periodic or monthly payment arrangements with groups requiring additional department services, with ballfield leagues, and with other groups, where a single payment is not practical for proper accounting procedures established by the Department.
- C. Permits are issued on a first come, first serve basis; however, priority shall be given to the activities of the Department. Requests for permits can be made for any dates, up to one (1) year in advance.
- D. No person under the age of eighteen (18) years shall be issued a permit to use the Park System.

## **GUIDELINES FOR ISSUANCE OF PERMITS**

- A. The Department shall issue a permit hereunder when it is satisfied that:
  - 1. The proposed use will not unreasonably interfere with or detract from the general public use and enjoyment of the Park System.
  - 2. The proposed use does not present a substantial or unwarranted safety hazard.
  - 3. The facilities desired have not been already reserved.
  - 4. The proposed use will not cause damage or injury to property.
  - 5. The proposed use complies with all applicable provisions of the Parks & Recreation Rules and Regulations.
- B. The Department shall take the following additional considerations into account in considering permit requests to fairly determine whether a permit should be issued hereunder and may require the requester to complete a special event application to aid in its determination:
  - 1. The size and purpose for which the park is normally used.
  - 2. The location of the park and the area surrounding it.
  - 3. The facilities available to accommodate the intended use.
- C. Any person or association of persons denied the issuance of a permit or a fee waiver may

appeal to the Board of Commissioners of Lancaster County in writing within ten (10) business days of being notified of said denial.

### **OPERATION AND PARKING OF MOTORIZED VEHICLES**

The County of Lancaster hereby exercises its power to control traffic within the physical boundaries of the Park System pursuant to 75 Pa.C.S.A. § 6102(b) and § 6109. In accordance with this authority,

A. No person shall:

1. Park a vehicle in the Park System between the hours of sunset and sunrise unless different hours are established by general or specific notifications or by permit or written permission from the Administrator.
2. Operate a vehicle and stop, stand, or park said vehicle in any place marked as a passenger or loading zone, other than for expeditious loading or unloading of passengers, or for the unloading and delivery or pickup and loading of materials.
3. Operate and stop, stand, or park a vehicle upon any roadway or in any parking area in such a manner as to form an obstruction to traffic thereon.
4. Drive upon or park upon any lawn in any park unless specifically authorized to do so by the Department.
5. Operate and stop, stand, or park a vehicle in such a manner as to block or restrict use of a campsite road, maintenance road, boat ramp, gate, bollard, pavilion access road, or bike/hiking/horse trail.
6. Operate a vehicle or park in any place where "No Parking," "Do Not Enter," "Road Closed," or "Authorized Vehicles Only" signs or any sign and/or barricades have been erected that would indicate that the area is not open to the general public without first obtaining permission from the Department.
7. Operate or park a vehicle in such a manner as to block the exit or removal of another vehicle.
8. Operate or park a vehicle in such a manner as to take up more than one designated parking spot.
9. Park in an area designated for persons with disabilities only without displaying a placard or license plate legally issued to the operator.
10. Operate a vehicle in excess of fifteen (15) M.P.H. within the Park System unless a higher rate of speed has been posted.
11. Operate a vehicle in any park or place other than park roadways open to the general public, with the exception of vehicles authorized by the Department for the purpose of park maintenance, improvement, or patrol functions, or to areas set aside as special use areas.
12. Operate any vehicle within the Park System in a manner which carelessly disregards the rights and safety of others or endangers any person or property.
13. Operate any type of minibike, scooter, dirt bike, ATV, snowmobile, or other motorized vehicle that is not authorized for operation on the public highways.
14. Wash or make mechanical repairs on vehicles except in cases of emergency.
15. Fail to yield the right of way to any person riding a horse, hiking, walking, or biking on designated trails where such trails cross streets or roadways.
16. Disobey the direction of a traffic control device or a duly authorized Park employee

or designee.

17. Operate a vehicle in a manner that causes damage or injury to turf, lawn, or Park System property.
- B. In conjunction with this section, the Motor Vehicle Code of Pennsylvania shall apply to all park roadways within the Park System.
  - C. The Department is hereby authorized to design and issue parking tickets and to establish, from time to time, by resolution, certain fines or penalties for violation of any provisions of these rules and regulations and may prescribe the place where such fines or penalties of these rules and regulations may, in lieu of issuing a citation, issue a notice of parking violation in such form as is prescribed by the Department. If such fine or penalty is not paid within the time limits prescribed by the Department, the person issuing said ticket shall appear before a district justice or other judicial officer having jurisdiction for the purpose of securing the issuance of a citation for the violation. In any case where the Department has not, by resolution, established a fine or penalty for any violation of this Section, the prescribed violation shall be presumed to be thirty five dollars (\$35.00) for parking in a designated handicapped parking space and twenty dollars (\$20.00) for any other violation.
  - D. The Department is hereby authorized and designated to establish areas which will be subject to the afore described violation and to provide for the installation of the necessary warning signs, traffic lines, and directional devices.
  - E. Whenever any vehicle has been parked in violation of the provisions of this Section prohibiting or restricting parking and no responsible driver is present, the person in whose name such vehicle is registered shall be responsible for such violation and subject to the penalty therefore.
  - F. All vehicles must be removed from the Park System within forty-eight (48) hours of discovery by a Park Ranger or other Park employee. Any vehicle remaining in the Park System after 48 hours has elapsed will be considered abandoned and will be subject to towing unless written permission for an extended stay is granted by the Administrator or his/her designee.

## **HORSES**

No person shall:

- A. Ride or lead a horse or pony upon any property within the Park System except on specifically designated areas or trails and paved roads.
- B. Ride a horse or pony in a careless, negligent, or reckless manner so as to create a nuisance or to endanger the life or property of persons within the Park System.
- C. Ride a horse or pony in a careless, negligent, or reckless manner causing damage to a trail or property within the Park System.

## **OPERATION OF BICYCLES**

No person shall:

- A. Ride a bicycle upon any property within the Park System except on specifically designated

areas or trails and paved roads.

- B. Ride a bicycle in a careless, negligent, or reckless manner so as to create a nuisance or to endanger the life or property of persons within the Park System.
- C. Ride a bicycle in a careless, negligent, or reckless manner causing damage to a trail or property within the Park System.

### **LITTERING**

- A. No person shall bring any wastepaper, sweepings, ashes, household waste, glass, metal, yard waste, animal waste or carcass, refuse or rubbish or any dangerous or detrimental substance into the Park System and deposit the same, either in a receptacle or any other place.
- B. Nothing in this section prohibits trash or waste generated in the Park System from a picnic or similar activity to be put into receptacles supplied for that purpose.

### **VANDALISM**

No person shall:

- A. Climb upon or in any way injure any statue, fountain, wall banister, ledge, fence, balustrade, railing, pavilion, tree, athletic equipment, bridge, or other equipment or structure or play on wet grounds in a manner injurious to turf.
- B. Tamper with, mar, remove, or destroy any official or authorized sign.
- C. Deposit any bodily waste or fluids in or on any portion of any restroom or similar facility or other public structure except directing into such particular fixtures as may be provided for that purpose.
- D. Place any bottle, can, rag, cloth, metal, wood, or stone substance in any of the plumbing fixtures in any restroom or similar facility or any other structure.
- E. Cut, deface, mar, destroy, break, write on, or scratch any walls, floor, ceiling, partition, tree, rock, fixture, or furniture.
- F. Use paper towels, toilet paper, or waste soap in any improper manner.
- G. Cause damage to any Park System facilities, including restrooms, buildings, structures, property, or equipment.
- H. Engage in any form of graffiti activity within the Park System.

### **OTHER PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES IN PARKS**

No person shall:

- A. Tamper with drinking fountains, hydrants, or other water system facilities or use water other than for drinking or cooking unless otherwise designated.
- B. Gamble in any form.
- C. Pour or cause to spill or permit to escape in any area any oil, gas, salt, acid, or other harmful or noxious substance whether liquid, solid, or gas, except pursuant to the provisions of an official permit.
- D. Urinate or defecate anywhere in the Park System except in a restroom or other facility

provided for such purposes.

- E. Engage in any form of golfing activity.
- F. Throw rocks, stones, or other objects from any overlook or cliff.
- G. Fail to obey a posted park sign.
- H. Use a skateboard, in-line skates, or similar wheeled apparatus or equipment except within an area designated as a skate park or on paved roadways.
- I. Camp in the Park System except in designated areas with a permit or in other areas with a special event permit.
- J. Construct or occupy any man-made "survival" shelters in the Park System unless part of an official Park System program.
- K. Draft water from waterways that run through the Park System without obtaining written permission from the Administrator.

### **DESTRUCTION OF PLANT LIFE AND NATURAL SURROUNDINGS**

No person shall:

- A. Cut, remove, or destroy any tree, sapling, seedling, bush, or shrub, living or dead, or chip, blaze, box, girdle, trim, or otherwise deface or injure any tree or shrub, or break or remove any branch, foliage, tree, or shrub, or pick, gather, uproot, remove, or destroy any flower, plant, or grass, or chisel, drill, or remove any natural stone deposit except with written permission from the Administrator.
- B. Remove or cause to be removed or to dig any sod, earth, humus, peat, boulder, rock, gravel, or sand except with written permission from the Administrator.
- C. Build a makeshift dam, or any other device or structure that interferes with the natural flow of water in waterways that run through the Park System.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

No person shall hitch, tie, fasten, nail, anchor, screw, or otherwise attach any wire, cable, chain, rope, card, sign, poster, advertisement, notice, announcement, handbill, board, or other articles or device to any post, tree, shrub, rock outcropping, traffic or park sign, or structure except in accordance with a special event permit issued by the Department.

### **METAL DETECTING**

No person shall use a metal detector in any fenced-in area or upon any athletic field or archeological site.

### **ALCHOLIC BEVERAGE**

A. No person shall:

- 1. Consume or possess an alcoholic beverage while in or upon property within the Park System.

2. Enter or remain within the Park System while under the influence of alcohol to the degree that they may be a danger to themselves or other persons or property.
- B. The Park Rangers shall confiscate alcoholic beverages in any person's possession while in or upon property within the Park System.

### **ILLEGAL DRUGS AND CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES**

- A. No person shall:
1. Consume or possess any illegal drug, drug paraphernalia, or controlled substance, as listed and defined in the act of April 14, 1972 (P.L. 233, No, 64), 35 P.S. § 780-101 et. seq., known as the Controlled Substance, Drug Device and Cosmetic Act, while in or upon any property within the Park System.
  2. Enter or remain within the Park System while under the influence of any illegal drug or controlled substance to the degree that they may be a danger to themselves or other persons or property.
- B. The Park Rangers shall confiscate illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia, or controlled substances in any person's possession while in or upon property within the Park System.
- C. Nothing in this section shall prohibit or interfere with the use or possession of a controlled substance pursuant to a lawful order of a practitioner as defined by the Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act.

### **PERSONAL CONDUCT**

No person shall:

- A. With the intent to cause public inconvenience, annoyance, or alarm, or recklessly creating a risk thereof
1. Engage in fighting or threatening, or in violent or tumultuous behavior;
  2. Make unreasonable noise; or
  3. Engage in any other behavior which would constitute the offense of disorderly conduct.
- B. Engage in any form of sexual activity.
- C. Appear in public in a manner that exposes genitalia or buttocks.
- D. Appear in public in a manner that exposes the female breast, including but not limited to topless sunbathing.

### **PEDDLING AND SOLICITING**

No person shall:

- A. Peddle or solicit business of any nature whatsoever or collect any fund for any service or charity or distribute handbills or post other advertising matter including unauthorized signs on property within the Park System unless first obtaining permission in writing from the Administrator.
- B. Display or post political signs or engage in any form of electioneering on property within the Park System except that posting of political signs and materials are permitted within one hundred (100) yards of buildings which are officially designated as polling places by the Lancaster County Board of Elections. Allowable materials may be posted two (2) days prior to an election and must be removed within one (1) day following the election. Any political signs or materials posted in or around the polling place must conform to the Election Code.

### **USE OF AUDIO EQUIPMENT**

No person shall:

- A. Use a loudspeaker, public address system, or amplifier within or upon property within the Park System without a special event permit issued by the Department.
- B. Play or cause to play any radio, audio device, television or stereo equipment, or similar device, at a volume which is reasonably anticipated to disturb or annoy others.

### **FIRES**

No person shall:

- A. Set or cause to be set on fire any tree, woodland, brush, grassland, or meadow.
- B. Set or cause to be set on fire any material, item, or property within the Park System which is not intended for such purposes.
- C. Build any fire except:
  - 1. Within fireplaces, metal grills, or approved fire rings using appropriate materials; or
  - 2. Fires in open spaces may be allowed with written approval from the Administrator and only in the area designated by the Administrator for such purposes.
- D. Drop, dump, throw, or otherwise scatter lighted matches, ashes, burning cigars, cigarettes, tobacco paper, or other flammable material.
- E. Leave fires unattended at any time or not fully extinguished before being abandoned within the Park System.

### **FIREWORKS AND EXPLOSIVES**

The possession or discharge of any fireworks or explosives on property within the Park System is prohibited, except with written permission from the Administrator.



## **ANIMALS, BIRDS AND REPTILES**

No person shall:

- A. Pursue, catch, attempt to catch, strike, molest, wound, or kill any bird, animal, or reptiles or disturb any nest, lair, den, burrow, or the like of any animal, except in such limited areas which the Department may from time to time designate as authorized hunting areas.
- B. Drive or pursue any wild bird or animal from the confines of the Park System.
- C. Spotlight or use vehicle headlights to view animals except in accordance with the Pennsylvania Game and Wildlife Code and the rules and regulations of the Pennsylvania Game Commission.
- D. Leave or abandon any animal in the Park System.

## **FISHING**

- A. Fishing with an appropriate license is permitted in all areas within the Park System except those areas specifically posted otherwise.
- B. Fishing must be done in accordance with the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Code and the rules and regulations of the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission.

## **HUNTING AND TRAPPING**

- A. Hunting is prohibited on all property within the Park System unless posted or designated otherwise.
- B. Hunting within the Park System, where permissible, shall be limited to shotgun, muzzle loader, and archery hunting. Hunting with a rifle is prohibited within the Park System at all times.
- C. Hunting must be done in accordance with the Pennsylvania Game and Wildlife Code and the rules and regulations of the Pennsylvania Game Commission.
- D. Trapping within the Park System is prohibited.

## **FIELD TRIAL AREAS**

The Department may set aside park areas on a permit basis to be used as field trial areas. Such areas will be open in compliance with the Pennsylvania Game and Wildlife Code and the rules and regulations of the Pennsylvania Game Commission.

## **DOGS, PETS AND OTHER ANIMALS**

- A. Dogs, pets, and other animals must be under control of the owner at all times either by leash or voice command unless otherwise posted.
- B. Animals must be attended and cared for at all times within the Park System.
- C. Dogs, if unleashed, must remain in the direct line of sight of their handlers and may not be permitted to stray from their handlers' fields of view.
- D. Any domestic animal which has injured another animal or patron in an unprovoked attack

within the Park System is prohibited from returning to the Park System for the remainder of its natural life.

E. No person shall:

1. Permit dogs, cats, or other domesticated animal within one hundred (100) feet of any picnic pavilion, play equipment, or other areas so posted.
2. Bring a dog, cat, or other domesticated animal into the Park System unless said animal holds a current year's license and up-to-date rabies vaccination tags.
3. Bring, drive, or lead any farm animal into the Park System except that horses may be ridden by persons in charge thereof or driven before a vehicle attached thereto in accordance with the rules and regulations pursuant to **HORSES**.
4. Torture, abuse, or neglect any animal.
5. Fail to remove any feces deposited by dogs or cats.

F. Nothing in this Section or these rules and regulations shall prohibit or interfere with the use of guide, signal, or service animals as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

### **TRESPASS**

No person shall:

- A. Enter upon any grounds or enter into any fenced-in area that have been posted by the Department with "No Trespassing" signs or any sign that would indicate that the area is not open to the general public without first obtaining a permit issued by the Department.
- B. Enter any building or area that is not open to the public.
- C. Enter upon any construction site or disturb any construction equipment on property within the Park System, with the exception of authorized personnel.
- D. Enter upon any grounds or any building in violation of an expulsion order issued by the Department.

### **UNLAWFUL OBSTRUCTION**

- A. No person shall force, threaten, intimidate, fence, enclose, or by any other means prevent or obstruct any person from:
  1. Entering, leaving, or making full use of the Park System.
  2. Accessing their personal property while within the Park System.
- B. This section shall not apply to lawful activities of authorized employees of the Department consistent with the terms of Ordinance Nos. 152 of 2022 and 153 of 2022 and other applicable statutes, rules, and regulations.

### **HINDERING EMPLOYEES**

No person shall:

- A. Interfere with or hinder any Park Ranger, Park employee, or designee in the performance of his/her duties.
- B. Fail or refuse to obey any lawful command by a Park Ranger, Park employee, or designee.
- C. Provide false information to a Park Ranger, Park employee, or designee.

## **FIREARMS AND WEAPONS**

- A. Possession of a firearm within the Park System shall be in accordance with the Pennsylvania Uniform Firearms Act (18 Pa.C.S.A. §§ 6101 et seq.).
- B. Discharge of a firearm is prohibited, except in the following circumstances:
  - 1. By any law enforcement officer or military personnel while carrying out the duties and responsibilities of his/her position;
  - 2. For hunting purposes in designated hunting areas as established by the Department and in accordance with Section 26 of these Rules and Regulations;
  - 3. In defense of human life or residence or place of business of the person discharging the firearm in accordance with applicable state laws;
  - 4. In accordance with a special event permit granted in accordance with these Rules and Regulations.
- C. Possession or use of a weapon is prohibited within the Park System unless specifically excepted as set forth in Title 18 of the Pennsylvania Statutes and Consolidated Statutes Annotated.
- D. Use or possession of an electric or electronic incapacitation device shall be in accordance with Title 18 of the Pennsylvania Statutes and Consolidated Statutes Annotated.
- E. No person shall use a firearm or weapon in a manner which places another in fear of imminent serious bodily injury.
- F. Use or discharge of an air rifle, air gun, paintball gun, BB gun, sling-shot, cross bow, bow and arrow, or any other tension/air-propelled device is prohibited unless in connection with a permissible fishing or hunting activity or in accordance with a special event permit granted in accordance with these Rules and Regulations.
- G. A Park Ranger shall confiscate any firearm or weapon in the possession of any person in violation of this section while in or upon property within the Park System.
- H. For the purposes of this section, "firearm" shall be defined in accordance with the Pennsylvania Uniform Firearms Act.
- I. For purposes of this section "weapon" shall mean:
  - 1. Any bomb, grenade, blackjack, sandbag, or metal knuckles;
  - 2. Any dagger, knife, razor, or cutting instrument, the blade of which is exposed in an automatic way by switch, push-button, spring mechanism, or otherwise or the blade is three (3) inches or longer and serves no common lawful purpose; or
  - 3. Any other implement for the infliction of serious bodily injury which serves no common lawful purpose.

## **FEES AND CHARGES**

- A. No person shall use any facility, campsite, land, or area for which a fee or charge has been established by the Department without pre-payment of such fee or charge.
- B. The Department may establish and, from time to time, revise fees and/or charges associated with use of the Park System.

## **NATURAL AREAS**

Natural areas in the Park System will be specific sites set aside where no buildings or structures are permitted. These areas are to be used by the public for their intended purpose and shall remain as nearly as possible uninfluenced by man, excepting accommodations for visitors for passive recreational uses.

## **STATE STATUTES, OTHER APPLICABLE REGULATIONS**

All applicable statutes, rules, and regulations of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania shall have full force and effect upon any property within the Park System and shall be enforced by those having appropriate jurisdiction.

## **PENALTIES**

Any person who violates any provisions of these rules and regulations shall, for every such offense, upon conviction thereof in a summary proceeding before a magistrate or district justice or other appropriate judicial official, be sentenced to pay a fine not more than six hundred dollars (\$600.00), as well as the cost of restitution, as applicable, and/or to undergo imprisonment for a term not exceeding ten (10) days. In addition, such person shall be liable to the full extent for any damage that he/she causes. Furthermore, any violation of these rules and regulations may, at the discretion of the Administrator or his/her designee, result in an expulsion from all Park System properties or any portion thereof for a minimum of six (6) months but not to exceed two (2) years depending on the severity of the violation.

## **PARK RANGER AUTHORITY**

Park Rangers are appointed pursuant to 16 P.S. § 2511(a) and are authorized to perform all necessary duties relating to maintaining public parks, recreational areas, and related buildings within the Park System, to perform police or guard duties within the Park System or other County owned property, and to enforce these Rules and Regulations. Pursuant to 16 P.S. § 2512(a), Park Rangers are hereby authorized to arrest, without warrant, any offender against the provisions of these Rules and Regulations and to take such persons before a magistrate, district justice, or other appropriate judicial officer having competent jurisdiction.

**Please visit the Lancaster County Department of Parks & Recreation's website to view the full text of Ordinance Nos. 152 of 2022 and 153 of 2022.**