CONTRA COSTA COUNTY
Use of County Parks Policy

1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide rules and regulations for the use of County parks to ensure park visitor safety and preserve the parks.

2.0 POLICY

This policy covers all Contra Costa County-owned parks. The County Ordinance Code codifies additional park rules, many of which are referenced in this policy.

3.0 BACKGROUND

Parks are an important community resource providing green spaces that promote recreation and enhance the quality of life for the community and park users. Park policies must balance rules and regulations that preserve park benefits for present and future generations while acknowledging and respecting the public's use of parks for expressive activity.

4.0 RULES AND REGULATIONS

A. Hours of Use. No person may remain in a county park at any time between the hours of ten p.m. and six a.m. the following day. (CCC Ord. Code, Art. 1110-2.8.)

B. Prohibitions on Use.
   1. No person may consume or sell alcohol in a county park without prior written permission from the public works director. (CCC Ord. Code, Art. 1110-2.6.)
   2. No person may use tobacco, cannabis, or narcotics of any form in a county park. (CCC Ord. Code, Art. 1110-2.7.)
   3. Littering is prohibited. Only garbage generated from activities within a county park may be deposited in garbage, compost, or recycling bins within the county park. All garbage must be deposited in any available garbage, compost, or recycling bins. If no bins are available, or if all bins are full, visitors must remove their garbage from the park.
   4. No person may sell, offer for sale, or distribute to the public generally, any food or drink without prior permission and all required Environmental Health permits or other authorizations.
   5. No person shall operate a motor vehicle in a county park without prior written permission from the public works director, except authorized emergency or maintenance vehicles. (CCC Ord. Code, Art. 1110-2.4.)
   6. Use of skateboards, electric scooters, and ebikes is prohibited.
   7. Camping is prohibited.
   8. Nothing may be posted on county buildings, benches, trees, bulletin boards, or other areas within a county park without prior permission.
   9. Sound amplification is prohibited without prior permission.

DRAFT

10. Glass bottles, beverage glasses, and other breakable glass containers are prohibited.
11. Tumbling, re-bounding, jumpers, bounce houses, inflatables, and trampoline-like devices are prohibited.
12. Barnyard animals such as ponies or petting zoo animals are prohibited.
13. Dogs must be leashed while in a county park, using a leash that is no longer than six feet in length.
14. Dangerous dogs, as defined in County Ordinance Code, Chapter 416-18, are prohibited in county parks.
15. Tents, umbrellas, canopies, awnings, and other removable structures are prohibited without prior permission.
16. The use of stakes or other devices that pierce the turf or landscape areas is prohibited.
17. Open flames are prohibited except in designated barbecue areas. No outside barbecues or grills may be used without prior permission. All coals must be properly smothered and removed. Dumping of coals in garbage bins or on the ground is prohibited.
18. Explosives (defined in Health & Safety Code, Section 12000), fireworks (defined in Health & Safety Code, Section 12511) and firearms (defined in Penal Code, Section 12001), air guns, bows and crossbows, slingshots, paintball guns, blowguns, and throwing knives and stars, are prohibited in county parks.

C. Permit Requirements. Groups of 20 or more persons and organized sports leagues may use a county park only pursuant to a permit issued by the public works director. Use of a county park under a permit is subject to the terms and conditions of the permit, as well as this bulletin, and may incur costs to permittee for insurance, permits, and outdoor restroom and hand washing facilities. (CCC Ord. Code, Art. 1110-2.10.)

D. Unauthorized Commercial Activity During County Events. During a county-sponsored event held in a county park, no person shall conduct business, display merchandise, conduct any occupation or profession, or provide services in the county park except as may be authorized in advance by, and within the location designated by, the public works director.

E. Expressive Activity.
   1. Expressive activity includes all forms of speech and expression including the distribution of information, solicitation of funds, collection of signatures, and performances.
   2. The County is committed to providing the right to engage in expressive activity on public property as protected by both the United States

DRAFT

Constitution and the California Constitution. County parks serve as traditional forums for expressive activity.

3. Expressive activity may not obstruct the use of the county park or obstruct the safe flow of pedestrians through a county park or its surrounding walkways or streets.
4. Expressive activity may not block emergency ingress or egress to a county park.

F. Prior Permission. Any written request for prior permission or a permit required under this policy must be submitted to the Public Works Department at least 30 days prior to the activity for which permission or a permit is sought.

DRAFT