



playUNITED

INCLUSION POLICY



Introduction

The Graham Recreation and Parks Department (GRPD) is committed to creating and promoting inclusion across all spaces, places, facilities and programs the department manages. The inclusion policy entitled playUNITED will guide the GRPD when developing facilities and programs, and establishing supporting practices to ensure everyone has access to the benefits of quality parks and recreation.

playUNITED Goals

playUNITED outlines GRPD's approach to ensuring inclusive environments and equitable opportunities for all community members in parks and recreation programs.

This policy ensures that:

- Community members utilizing GRPD facilities, programs and services have equitable and appropriate access, regardless of ability, race, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion or country of origin.
- GRPD staff, community partners and stakeholders engage in the support of all community members and promote inclusive behaviors in parks, recreation facilities and other GRPD managed spaces throughout the community.
- GRPD staff, community partners and stakeholders engage in the support of all community members and promote inclusive behaviors in recreation programs managed by the City.
- GRPD establishes and maintains an organizational infrastructure for management, oversight, implementation, and communication about and monitoring of the policy and its established goals and objectives.
- GRPD will continuously measure and seek to improve inclusive practices.

playUNITED applies to all participating community members, staff, and facilities which comprises the Graham Recreation and Parks Department system and programs.

Staff Training

GRPD staff will regularly participate in trainings grounded in effective training models using evidence-based content. Training will be comprehensive (covers multiple topics), based on credible research and delivered by qualified personnel. All new staff members will be quickly oriented to inclusive policies and practices.

The GRPD Inclusive Training Plan will include a minimum of 150 total hours of training per year for all staff. Fulltime staff members will each receive a minimum of 10 hours of training per year and part-time staff working more than 40 total hours will each receive a minimum of 3 hours of training. Trainings will address issues related to providing services (with a focus on recreation) for historically marginalized communities.

Trainings will include educational sessions at various conferences and workshops provided by the National Recreation and Parks Association, the North Carolina Recreation and Parks Association, Recreation Resources Service, local health care organizations and foundations and online resources.

At a minimum, topics will address:

- Respect and Civility
- Unconscious bias
- Cultural competency
- Sensitivity
- Preventing Discrimination and Harassment
- Creating an Inclusive Workspace

Organizational Support

GRPD and staff will establish organizational supports that create a social environment (including positive relationships among staff, youth, families and community) that encourages all to be inclusive. This includes:

Staff

Demonstrating an attitude of inclusion, including nondiscriminatory language and actions

Determining and addressing any potential unintended outcomes of activities, programs or parks to ensure they do not limit participation based on ability, age, sexual orientation, identity, religion or country of origin

Providing educational materials about inclusion to all constituents at community events

Sharing and discussing practices during community meetings

Agency

Developing an advisory group and/or community network of groups that support inclusive behaviors in the community

Assessing agency hiring practices to ensure staff is representative of the diverse community and is an equal-opportunity employer

Communications

Providing positive messages about diversity and inclusion through written and verbal messaging, posters, pictures and books

Facilities

Developing a plan to renovate GRPD facilities to meet minimum ADA standards where appropriate

Ensuring all new playgrounds will feature inclusive elements with playgrounds in the community and regional parks featuring a minimum of 50% inclusive elements

Reasonable Accommodations for Programs

GRPD will work with interested participants to create reasonable accommodations through a Request for Services procedure (website, printed applications, etc.). Requests should be submitted at the time of registration and/or four (4) weeks prior to the program start date. Certain accommodations, such as a program companion, require a minimum of eight (8) weeks.

Examples of accommodations the GRPD may provide:

- Allowing service animals in programs;
- Altering rules of games/activities, as long as it does not fundamentally alter the purpose of the game/activity;
- Relocating the game/activity from a non-accessible facility to an accessible facility;
- Providing assisted listening devices
- Providing additional staff
- Providing enhanced medication support as outlined in the GRPD Medication Policy

This is not an exhaustive list of accommodations the GRPD will provide. When an accommodation is requested, we will work with the potential participant and any necessary additional service providers to enable successful participation. The GRPD will not provide service which are personal in nature such as feeding, toileting, or the changing of clothes. We also do not provide services that are invasive in nature such as catheterization or g-tube feeding. However, we will allow the person who requires such services to bring a personal care attendant, at no additional charge, to enable participation

Environmental Support

When appropriate, the GRPD will establish environmental supports and practices that promote inclusion. Examples of environmental supports include:

- Program adaptation for inclusion, depending on the individual needs and abilities of participants
- One-on-one trained staff support throughout the program
- Language interpretation, including but not limited to:
 - Sign language interpreters or language translation services
 - Audio/visual support
 - Large-print signage
- Accessible transportation
- Built environment enhancements, including modified equipment and ramps
- Gender-neutral restrooms and changing rooms
- Culturally sensitive program hours
- Signage and additional facility enhancements (artwork, murals, etc.) that promote diversity and inclusion

Continuous Measurement and Improvement

GRPD will work to continuously improve our diversity, equity and inclusion efforts, measuring the effectiveness of this policy through staff and community qualitative and quantitative feedback through meetings, community engagement events, public forums, surveys, and monitoring economic and health indicators. GRPD will establish a communications plan for reporting on progress. The playUNITED report will be released to the public and posted on the GRPD website (www.grahamrecreationandparks.com) biannually beginning in July, 2023.

GRPD will monitor the following indicators to track progress of inclusive efforts:

- Does our agency communicate a vision that values the participation of all people as members of the community?
- Does our agency's improvement plan include inclusive practices with action steps to support implementation?
- Is there adequate, regularly scheduled, ongoing planning time for agency staff to collaborate on inclusive programs and events?
- Does our agency engage the entire community by providing multiple opportunities and modes for participating?
- Are there professional development opportunities for staff regarding inclusive strategies and supports?
- Are community members from targeted populations engaged in programming, utilizing facilities and taking part in future planning conversations?

Long-term indicators:

- Are there improvements in health (physical, social, mental) outcomes across targeted populations?

Resources

GRPD recognizes this policy is an ever-evolving resource and aims to keep it updated on a biannual basis. For more on diversity, inclusion, and equity, we encourage staff and community members to visit www.grahamrecreationandparks.com or the National Recreation and Park Association's *Parks for Inclusion* website, www.nrpa.org/ParksForInclusion.