

**Austin
Sunshine
Camps**

Volunteer Handbook



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About Us

History

In 1928, The Young Men's Business League (YMBL) of Austin recognized the serious community threat of youth tuberculosis and became dedicated to making a significant contribution to the solution. The YMBL members established the Austin YMBL Summer Sunshine Camps in Zilker Park to provide local afflicted and economically disadvantaged youth an environment in which to gain weight, grow strong once again, and enjoy the sunshine, as it was said that sunshine could assist in curing tuberculosis. Today, Austin Sunshine Camps is still serving youth living near or below the poverty line.

Mission

To engage and empower youth through education and outdoor experiences.

Vision

To ignite infinite possibilities for Austin's youth.

Value Statements

Accountability- Acknowledging and assuming responsibility for actions, decisions, policies and programs.

Integrity- Acting with honesty and honor in all that we do.

Accessibility- Removing the barriers that inhibit access to programs, staff and stakeholders.

Intention- Making decisions with regard to the values of Austin Sunshine Camps.

Community- Connecting people around a shared vision and common values.

Caring- Regarding others with kindness and consideration.

Learning- Providing an environment that fosters growth and development.



Programs

Summer Camp

Austin Sunshine Camps offers free summer camp opportunities to low income children throughout Austin and the surrounding communities. Each summer more than 850 youth attend camp at Zilker Park or Lake Travis. During camp, campers participate in activities such as canoeing, swimming, archery, science, and arts and crafts. By combining methods of experiential education and traditional camp activities, the Sunshine Camps provide students with the opportunity to develop self-esteem, personal growth, and interpersonal skills.

Sunshine Afterschool

Sunshine Afterschool is a program for middle school aged students who attend Fulmore Middle School and qualify for free or reduced lunch. Programming is focused on STEM, life skills, and outdoor education to ensure students succeed in middle school and beyond. Our goal is to provide an environment that is a safe and fun place for middle school aged children to develop new skills and prepare them for the rigors of high school.

Volunteer Opportunities

Summer Camp

When summer camp is in session we offer opportunities to volunteer at our Carnival Nights. Carnival Night is held on the first evening of every camp session at Zilker Park and offers campers a chance to settle in and become excited about their week at camp. Volunteers will help set up and run traditional carnival games such as ring toss, bowling, fishing, cornhole, and face-painting. Requirements include completing our background check process. See the “How to Sign Up to Volunteer” section on page 5 for more information on the sign-up process.

Sunshine Afterschool

Sunshine Afterschool is offered five days a week during the school year from 4:00 – 6:00pm. Full day programming is also offered between 9:00am – 5:00pm on teacher in-service days and select holidays. Volunteers work with students and support program activities such as aviation, robotics, and roller coasters (STEM); shelter building, canoeing, geo caching (Outdoor Activities); service learning, goalsetting, and art (Life Skills).

Daily Schedule

4:00 – 4:20 – Snack
4:20 – 4:45 – Homework
4:45 – 5:00 – Outside games
5:00 – 5:45 - STEM, Life Skills, or Outdoor Activities

Activity Schedule

Monday – Math
Tuesday – Outdoors
Wednesday – Math
Thursday – Science, technology, or engineering
Friday – Life Skills

Volunteer Requirements

Volunteer Application Process

Anyone 18 years of age or older who wants to volunteer with Austin Sunshine Camp at an event with our students or campers must consent to an annual nationwide criminal and sex offender background check and have it approved by us prior to the event. If you want to volunteer with Austin Sunshine Camps at an independent event where our students or campers are not present, no background check is necessary. Please contact the Volunteer Coordinator directly, who can lead you to the website to begin your background check or schedule your independent volunteer event. The Volunteer Coordinator can be reached by phone at 512.472.8107 or email at info@sunshinecamps.org.

Background Checks

Austin Sunshine Camps uses www.campbackgroundchecks.com to complete all background checks. The cost is \$10 per volunteer and must be renewed annually if a volunteer chooses to continue to serve with us. The background check fee must be submitted along with the request for a background check. YMBL members complete this process as part of their membership with YMBL.

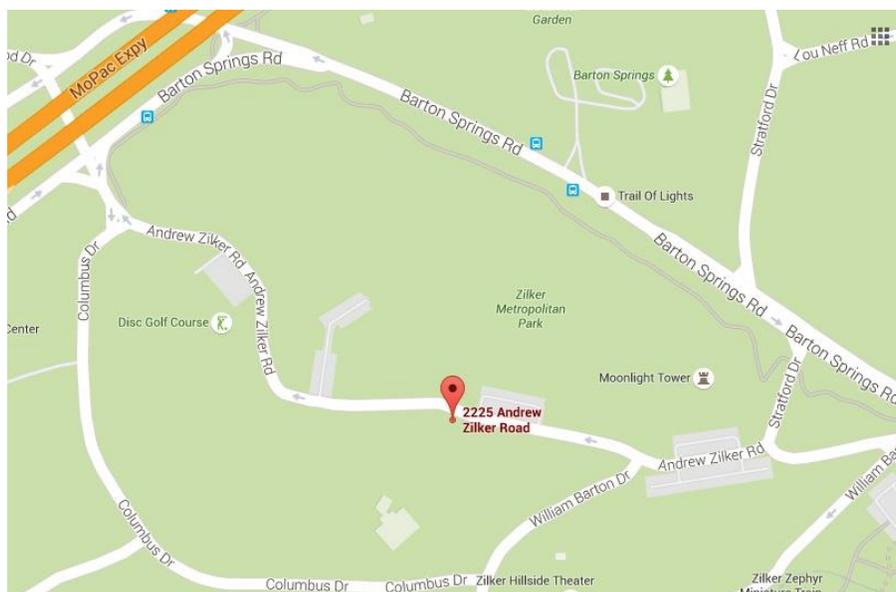
How to sign-up to Volunteer

Once the background check is completed and approved, volunteers will receive an email that includes a link to our Pre-Volunteer Service Survey may then RSVP on the individual event on our webpage.

Expectations for Volunteering With Us

Where to Go

Austin Sunshine Camps is located in Zilker Park at 2225 Andrew Zilker Road, 78746. Parking is available across from the camp driveway in the park. There is no parking available at the camp. All volunteers should park and then walk to the camp at their designated arrival time.



Volunteer Check-in

Upon arrival, all volunteers need to check in with the Volunteer Coordinator. You will be provided with an overview of the activities for the day and more information about how volunteers can best support the program. To reach the Volunteer Coordinator, call 512.472.8107.

Attire

Volunteers should wear comfortable clothing that will allow for participation in a variety of indoor and outdoor activities. Closed toe shoes are recommended. Please ensure that clothing worn is at an appropriate length and does not portray any language or designs that may be found offensive which includes things related to alcohol, drugs, sex, etc. Keep in mind that some activities can get messy and volunteer attire should allow for full participation in all activities.

Interaction with Students and Campers

In order for volunteers to have a meaningful experience during their time with Austin Sunshine Camps, it is important that you interact and engage with students and or campers. Examples of engagement include: sit with students during snack and hold a conversation; help students work through problems with homework; actively participate during activities (inside and out!); or ask the Austin Sunshine Camps Staff if there are specific students/campers you can work with. Safe topics of discussion include the sharing of information, positive experiences, your career, things you or the child enjoys, positive things in the child's life (extra-curriculars, clubs, sports, interests, classes), goals, and compliments! Some things NOT to talk about include personal information, complaints, sex, drugs, alcohol, religion, politics, and income.

Because our students and campers are so great, you might find yourself wanting to take pictures of or with them. In addition to not allowing cell phones during programming, we ask that you do NOT take photos of our students or campers. We do not share who of our students or campers are foster children and state policy prohibits us from taking photos of foster children.

Volunteer and Camper Safety

Volunteers as well as Austin Sunshine Camps staff should never be alone with a student or camper. A minimum of two adults and one student or two students and one adult should be maintained at all times. Volunteers should NOT have contact with students outside of programming on social media. If a student reaches out to you on social media, please bring this to the attention of program staff.

Behavior Management

Volunteers will encounter different behaviors when working with students or campers. If negative behaviors occur, volunteers should immediately ask for assistance from a program staff member. Be cognizant of the behavior and actions that you're modeling; volunteers should avoid raising their voice, threatening students or campers, and talking to kids about a situation when they are upset. Volunteers should never strike or hit a student or camper.

Belongings & Restrooms

Belongings can safely be kept downstairs in a room that the students are prohibited from entering. Cell phone use is not permitted during program time. If volunteers need to take or make a call they should step outside of the program space to do so.

Second floor restrooms are reserved for volunteers of Sunshine Afterschool. Downstairs restrooms are for campers and under no circumstances should you use these restrooms.

Non Discrimination Statement

“In accordance with federal law and US Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.”

Complaint Filing Procedures

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call 1-866-632-9992 (Toll free), 1-800-877-8339 (Federal Relay Service) or 1-800-845-6136 (Spanish Speaking Assistance). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.