

Guidelines for It's My Park Volunteers

Last Updated: July 14, 2021

Thank you for your interest in volunteering for NYC Parks during this unprecedented time. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, parks have become more important than ever for New Yorkers; providing space for exercise, access to nature, and many other ways to cope. City parks have seen a dramatic increase in use during this crisis, and any help you can offer is greatly needed and appreciated.

In order to ensure your health and safety, in addition to the health and safety of other park patrons and NYC Parks staff, please make sure to follow the guidelines from the [nyc.gov volunteer page](#) and listed below while volunteering for NYC Parks. We ask you to review this entire document thoroughly, and keep it accessible in order to review as needed. Please note: failure to abide by these guidelines may lead to a suspension of your individual and your group's ability to volunteer for NYC Parks.

- Perform a [self-health check](#) at home to see if you may be sick with the coronavirus. If you exhibit any of the following symptoms, do NOT volunteer.
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - Fever
 - Chills
 - Muscle pain
 - Sore throat
 - New loss of taste or smell
- Please wear a mask if you are unvaccinated, if you cannot maintain social distancing, or if it makes you feel more comfortable. A face covering can include anything that covers your nose and mouth including dust masks, reusable cotton masks, scarves, and bandanas.

- Please maintain at least six feet between you and others regardless of your vaccination status.
- Wash your hands often, including at the start and end of your volunteer project. Use soap and water and scrub for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Do not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Wear gloves when handling tools loaned to you for your project.

To lead your own It's My Park project, we require all project leaders to submit an [It's My Park Project Leader Application](#) at least two weeks before your project date but not more than ten weeks in advance. Each application is a project proposal; it is subject to approval and project details may need to be altered. Please wait until confirmation from a PfP staff member before finalizing project day plans. All projects are subject to a change in approval due to unforeseen or extenuating circumstances.

We request that all volunteers focus on the first three activities below and fill out an [outcomes form](#) after each It's My Park project to let us know about the work you completed and any issues or concerns that came up which we may need to address.

- Litter pick-up
 - If you find a needle, other drug paraphernalia, or other sharp objects please do not handle it. Call a Parks staff member or 311 to notify them instead.
- Weeding
 - In cobblestones throughout the park, along pathways, and in garden beds.
 - If you are weeding in garden beds and have any doubt about a particular plant being a weed, please do NOT remove it. Some plants are slow-growing and can be expensive.
- Leaf Raking
 - Clearing off leaves from pathways, garden beds, and lawns.

Taking into consideration supply availability and the necessity of the project, we may also approve your group to complete:

- Painting
 - Paint over graffiti or other various park fixtures (benches, light poles, wrought iron fencing, etc.) in need of a fresh coat of paint.
- Planting
 - Plant flowers or shrubs in garden beds in need of brightening up.
- Mulching
 - Mulch horticulture areas and tree beds.

Thank you for volunteering for NYC Parks!