

**BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS OF THE
CLEVELAND METROPOLITAN PARK DISTRICT
POLICY STATEMENT**

SUBJECT: Dignity and Respect for All Policy

EFFECTIVE DATE: September 18, 2025

I. PURPOSE

The Board of Park Commissioners of the Cleveland Metropolitan Park District is committed to fostering, cultivating and preserving a culture of Dignity and Respect for All.

People are one of the most valuable assets we have. The collective sum of the individual differences, life experiences, knowledge, inventiveness, innovation, self-expression, unique capabilities and talent that our employees invest in their work and that our guests bring to our Park District represent a significant part of not only our culture, but our reputation and the Park District's achievements as well.

We embrace and encourage our employees' and guests' differences in age, color, disability, ethnicity, family or marital status, gender, gender identity or expression, language, national origin, physical and mental ability, pregnancy, race, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, and veteran or military status.

All Cleveland Metroparks' employees and volunteers have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect – a Core Value - at all times.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. **Dignity and Respect:** We believe that dignity and respect are the foundations for the way we conduct all our personal and organizational business. Fairness, sincerity and compassion are integral to this value.
- B. **Guest Focus:** We recognize that we exist to serve our customers and that each interaction with a visitor or member of the public is an opportunity to deliver on the promises of our mission. Because of this, we will always place the customer and their experience first.
- C. **Accessibility:** Accessibility is the degree to which as many people as possible can access and benefit from Cleveland Metroparks.

III. POLICY

- A. **Focus Areas and Best Practices:** Cleveland Metroparks staff shall execute the following best practices to advance dignity and respect in the following areas:

- 1. **Compliance with Federal, State and Local Rules, Regulations, and Statutes**
Cleveland Metroparks shall operate its programs, services, activities and employment practices without regard to age, color, disability, ethnicity, family or marital status, gender, gender identity or expression, genetic information, language, national origin, physical and mental ability, pregnancy, race, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, and veteran or military status.

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2. **Conformance with Cleveland Metroparks Core Goals:** while the Park District endeavors to advance a culture of dignity and respect for all people, the focus areas and best practices inspired by this policy statement shall contribute to Cleveland Metroparks' purpose-driven actions. The Mission and six Core Goals, the guiding tenets of 2022's *Cleveland Metroparks Second Century of Stewardship System Plan*, will provide a stable framework for the consideration and implementation of best practices in both workplace and community efforts centered on Guest Focus and accessibility. Actionable items and new initiatives will contribute to one of the following Core Goals while promoting the Mission:

a. **Conserve:** conserve land, wildlife and water to protect the beauty, ecological function and resilience of our region and the world.

b. **Connect:** connect people to nature and each other to build community and inspire positive action.

c. **Welcome:** welcome all people to explore the parks and zoo and prioritize inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility.

d. **Engage:** engage and serve people with high quality facilities, compelling zoological experiences, volunteer and recreational opportunities and captivating programs and events.

e. **Sustain:** sustain and uplift our region, our parks, our people and our infrastructure for future generations.

f. **Innovate:** innovate by exploring new solutions to expand the health and well-being of our region and the world.

III. PROCEDURES

A. **Community Engagement Team:** Cleveland Metroparks Chief Executive Officer (CEO), in consultation with Department Chiefs, shall appoint at least one Department employee to serve on the Cleveland Metroparks Community Engagement Team (CET).

1. The Community Engagement Team shall meet regularly to oversee the implementation of this Policy and make recommendations that support Dignity and Respect to the CEO.

2. Each Community Engagement Team member shall serve as the departmental liaison, will be known as a "CET Coordinator", and will be the point of contact and clearinghouse for all Community Engagement related issues related to this Policy for that department. The departmental CET Coordinator along with the Department Chief shall communicate and monitor applications of best practices within that department.

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3. An Outreach **Steering Council**, comprised of Department Chiefs/Directors and other Human Resources professionals, will guide the CET Team in the selection and prioritization of CET-related initiatives. The Council will provide expertise, along with direction, training, resources and funding to support the Community Engagement Team's efforts to further the mission and align with the Core Goals of Cleveland Metroparks.

B. Compliance with Policy:

1. All commissioners, employees, officers, volunteers, affiliates, vendors, contractors, and any individual or entity acting on behalf of Cleveland Metroparks shall comply with this Policy.

2. The success of Cleveland Metroparks' Dignity and Respect efforts depends on the appropriate dedication of resources and the efforts and compliance of all commissioners, employees, officers, volunteers, affiliates, vendors, contractors, and any individual or entity acting on behalf of Cleveland Metroparks.

3. The CEO, or their designee, shall ensure that the required notices related to this policy are properly posted.

- a. Notice Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act Discrimination (non-disability):
Cleveland Metroparks operates its programs, services, and activities without regard to race, color, religion, age, national origin, national ancestry, sex, pregnancy, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, military service or veteran status, mental or physical disability, or genetic information, in accordance with the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, the 1972 Amendments to the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the age Discrimination Act, and Executive Order 13166.

4. Complaints under this Policy related to Title VI Discrimination matters other than employment should be directed to the Chief Legal & Ethics Officer at rmf1@clevelandmetroparks.com or 216.635.3200. Employment-related complaints shall follow the processes prescribed in the Cleveland Metroparks Employee Handbook.

5. Cleveland Metroparks also prohibits retaliation based on protected activities, such as the filing of a complaint of discrimination, participation in the investigation of such a claim, or reporting activity that is believed by the employee to be a violation of law or ethics or a waste of public funds. Any witness, complainant or respondent involved in an investigation or involved in reporting suspected unlawful or unethical activity shall not be retaliated against for their participation in the reporting or fact-finding processes.

References:

Title VI & VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; The Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as amended (42 U.S.C. §3789d);
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended (20 U.S.C. §1681, et seq.);
Section 13 of the 1972 Amendments to the Federal Water Pollution Control Act;

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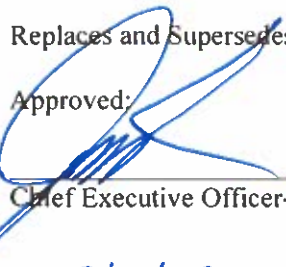
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Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973;
Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990;
The Age Discrimination Act of 1975;
Ohio Revised Code Chapter 4112;
Executive Order 14151;
Executive Order 14168;
Executive Order 14173

Replaces and Supersedes: Dignity & Respect for All Policy, September 17, 2020

Approved:


for: Chief Executive Officer-Secretary (Joseph V. Roszak, COO)


Board President

9/18/25
Approval Date

September 2030
Review Date