

Mayor and Council Communication

DATE: 11/30/21

M&C FILE NUMBER: M&C 21-0930

LOG NAME: 80STANDARDSOFCARE-2022

SUBJECT

(ALL) Conduct Public Hearing and Adopt Ordinance Establishing Standards of Care for Youth Programs in the City of Fort Worth for 2022

(PUBLIC HEARING - a. Report of City Staff: Sonia Singleton; b. Citizen Presentations; c. Council Action: Close Public Hearing and Act on M&C)

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council conduct a public hearing and adopt the attached ordinance establishing the Standards of Care for Youth Programs in the City of Fort Worth for 2022.

DISCUSSION:

This Mayor and Council Communication (M&C) is requesting that City Council adopt the attached ordinance establishing Standards of Care (Standards) for Youth Programs in the City of Fort Worth for 2022. The Standards set requirements for supervision of programs for youth ages 5 through 13.

In 1995, the Texas Legislature amended Section 42.041 of the Human Resources Code to exempt elementary aged (5 through 13 years) municipal youth recreation programs from the State's licensing requirement under certain conditions. This law requires that a city annually adopt standards by ordinance after a public hearing. Adopted standards must be provided to the parents of each program participant and must include, at a minimum: staffing ratios, minimum staff qualifications, minimum facility, health and safety standards and mechanisms for monitoring and enforcing the adopted local standards. State law also requires that parents be informed that the program is not licensed by the State and that the program may not be advertised as a child care facility.

The Standards are intended to be minimum standards by which the City of Fort Worth Park & Recreation, Neighborhood Services, and other potentially affected departments will operate the City's youth programs. In accordance with the current Standards, the director is required to make an annual report on the overall status of the youth programs and their operation relative to compliance with the adopted Standards.

The items listed below provide information regarding the prior year's activities:

1. Youth programs were offered at 20 community centers and four mobile sites providing services to 1,327 youth.
2. Average ratio of participants to staff during these programs was 15:1.
3. All Staff working directly with youth received a tuberculin test.
4. All Staff working directly with youth at each facility were certified in First Aid and CPR/AED.
5. All Staff received training on the Standards of Care.
6. Safety inspections were completed at each facility on a weekly basis during youth programming.

The Standards of Care are in place year round. In accordance with the legislation, the Standards of Care and Ordinance must be submitted for adoption to the City Council on an annual basis. The 2022 Standards have twelve minor modifications highlighted in the attached policy, including:

Activities Section: Field Trips & Transportation (Page 7) Section III.A.2. – Provides for electronic lists of participants. **Participant Pick Up & Drop Off** (Page 8) Section IV.G. – Provides for electronic sign in and sign out and electronic record retention for life of software application. (Page 9) Section IV.I. - Provides for electronic signature to allow children to walk home. Section IV.J. - Removes calling the police if child not picked up within 30 minutes of program ending. **Discipline** (Page 10) Section V.E.1. - Removes calling the police if a participant is not picked up. Section V.F.6. - Requires cell phones to be put away during program time.

Facility Operations Section: Inspection/Monitoring/Enforcement (Page 11) Section I.A.1. - Corrects typo (removes the word "of"). Section I.A.2. - Removes need to send Facility Inspection checklist reports to the Director, but they will still be retained for two years. Section I.A.3. - Program Coordinator, not Director, will review the reports and establish deadlines and criteria for compliance with Standards of Care.

Health & Safety Section: Health (Page 12) Section I.A.7. - Adds Tarrant County Public Health to agencies that can provide recommendations to staff. Section I.A.8. - Corrects the name of Tarrant County Public Health. **Nutrition** (Page 15) Section V.B. - Allows parents to note allergies on the electronic registration form.

At its November 17, 2021 meeting, the Park & Recreation Advisory Board reviewed and endorsed staff's recommendations to the City Council to adopt these standards.

The Standards affect programs in ALL COUNCIL DISTRICTS.

FISCAL INFORMATION / CERTIFICATION:

The Director of Finance certifies that this action will have no material effect on City funds.

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