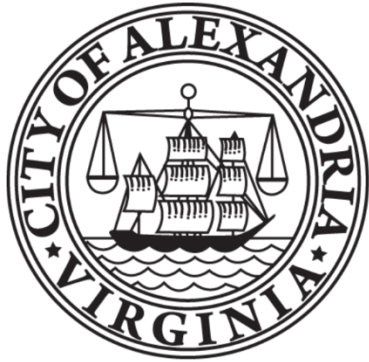




DEPARTMENT OF
**RECREATION, PARKS &
CULTURAL ACTIVITIES**

Power-On and Power-Up Afterschool Program 2026

Standard Operating Procedures Manual (SOP)

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/recreation-programs/out-of-school-time-power-onpower-up-programs>

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City of Alexandria
Department of Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities (RPCA)
Recreation Services Division



Power-On and Power-Up Out of School Time Program (OSTP) Standards

The Power-On and Power-Up schoolyear and summer programs provide daily recreational activities for elementary and middle school-aged children after the school day and throughout the summer, as a service to families and the community. Power-On and the Power-Up Program are not licensed childcare programs but are based on local standards approved by Alexandria's City Attorney. The Recreation Services Division's Out of School Time Program promotes quality service through core program activities that develop the whole child. Participants are grouped by age ranges and/or grade levels. Each group rotates through daily activities scheduled in the areas of creative and performing arts, fine arts, sports, fitness and health, and education and leisure based on monthly themes, as well as participates in occasional field trips and family events. Participants benefit from a variety of programs and services and experience one or more of the following benefits:

- Increase social interactions and develop friendships.
- Improve social skills.
- Enjoy participating in activities in a safe, positive, and friendly environment.
- Enhance physical and/or emotional well-being.
- Enhance the development of knowledge, skills, and abilities through participation in recreation, enrichment, and leisure-time activities

Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities Mission/Vision/Values

Mission: We enrich the City of Alexandria by creating meaningful experiences through public space, cultural activities, and programming.

Vision: We will improve the well-being of every person in our community by connecting them to each other and their environment.

Values: Equity, Exceptional Customer Experiences, Safety, Continuous Learning, Integrity, and Civic Responsibility

ALL Alexandria Vision & Goal

Vision: Alexandria is a caring, kind, compassionate, fair, just, and equitable city that is an affordable, livable community **for ALL**.

Goal: **Reduce and eliminate disparities and inequities** experienced by ALL Alexandria residents, especially residents of color and those who have been historically and systemically marginalized.

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

Hours of Operation

The **afterschool program** operates Monday through Friday during the months of August to June from the time of school dismissal until 6:00 pm.

The **Powerful Fun Day** and **Kids Day Out Program** operate on designated dates during the months of August to June, from 9 am to 6 pm. Before Care will be offered 8 to 9 am for an additional fee (Winter and Spring sessions offered at a flat fee and are not prorated).

The **summer camp program** operates Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. – 6 p.m. during the months of June to August. Before care is available for a fee at each Recreation Center and other OSTP school locations.

Before and after care are available for a fee for youth registered in Camps at Chinquapin Center, Sports and Specialty Camps, and Day Camps.

Core Program Areas:

- **Cultural Arts:** Activities that promote creativity, self-expression, and appreciation of diverse cultures through visual arts, music, dance, theater, media arts, and cultural experiences. This program area helps youth build confidence, communication skills, and cultural awareness.
- **Academic Support:** Structured learning opportunities that reinforce school-day instruction through homework help, tutoring, literacy development, study skills, and academic enrichment activities designed to improve student achievement and learning confidence.
- **Safety, Health & Well-Being:** Programs and activities that support students' physical, emotional, and social wellness by promoting healthy habits, personal safety, mental health awareness, conflict resolution, and positive relationship-building in a safe and supportive environment.
- **STEAM Enrichment:** Hands-on learning experiences focused on Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics that encourage problem-solving, innovation, creativity, critical thinking, and real-world application of academic concepts.
- **Civic Responsibility:** Opportunities that help youth develop leadership, character, community awareness, and social responsibility through service-learning, teamwork, volunteerism, cultural understanding, and activities that encourage active and engaged citizenship.
- **Sport/Cooperative Games:** Physical activities, team sports, and cooperative games that promote fitness, teamwork, sportsmanship, communication, leadership, and healthy competition while encouraging positive peer interaction and active lifestyles.

Staff Supervision

The ratio of staff to registered participants is as follows:

- Grades K - 1 is 1:20
- Grades 2 - 6 is 1:25
- Grades 6 – 9 is 1:25

Maintaining appropriate staff-to-participant ratios is the single most critical component of safe recreation programming. Ratios must be always maintained – during activities, transitions, meals, restroom breaks, and emergencies.

City Of Alexandria

Relationships and Employment – A.R. 6-3: Employment Requirements

Nepotism is strictly prohibited. Employees are prohibited from being placed in direct line of supervision with a family member.

- Examples include but are not limited to:
 - Employees who have a familial, domestic, or personal relationship to a candidate for employment may not serve on a hiring panel or participate in an employment process of any kind that involves said candidate.
 - Employees may not hire to work in their direct line of supervision if there is a familial, domestic, or similar personal relationship.
 - When it is not detrimental to the public service, reasonable care should be exercised to avoid scheduling employees in such a way as to inhibit their use of off-duty time where both husband and wife are employed in the same department.

RPCA Procedure

- Employees who have a familial, domestic, or personal relationship to a program participant, who is enrolled in the Power-On/ Power-Up Out of School Time program may not work or be assigned to a location where that said program participant is enrolled.

Ratio Compliance Procedures

- Count participants at the start of every activity block and document in the daily attendance log.
- If a staff member leaves the supervision area for any reason, immediately redistribute participants or call in coverage – never leave a group below ratio.
- **Post the daily ratio on the site whiteboard and update it in real time as participants arrive or depart.**
- Notify the Site Coordinator or Supervisor immediately if the site falls below the required ratio and a replacement cannot be arranged within 15 minutes.
- During field trips, verify the ratio before boarding and upon arriving at every destination.

Head Counts

A participant who cannot be accounted for at any moment is a participant at risk. Rigorous, consistent head count and attendance protocols are the foundation of supervision accountability.

Required Head Count Checkpoints

- Upon participant arrival / sign-in

- At the start of every activity transition (moving rooms, going outdoors, changing groups). Staff must line the group up and/ or pause the activity to count each participant individually.
- Before and after any restroom break
- Before and after any meal or snack period
- Upon departure from the facility or any off-site location
- Any time a participant or staff member raises concern about a missing person

Age Participation

Power-On Afterschool Program serves youth ages 5-12 years/grades K-6 (children may be 4 if attending Kindergarten for the school year program and must turn 5 years old by September 30)

After School Program begins and ends based on the Alexandria City Public School Traditional Academic Calendar

Summer Power-On/ Power-Up Program - 8 weeks beginning first Monday after ACPS school year ends.

Summer Eligibility Requirement

Power-On: Rising 1st graders through rising 6th graders, who are between the ages of 6 and 11, are eligible to enroll in this program.

Power-Up: Rising 6th graders through rising 9th graders, who are between the ages of 12 and 14, are eligible to enroll in this program.

Program Layout, Curriculum, Core Programming Areas

The Out of School Time Program is structured around four core programming areas designed to promote the holistic development of each participant: Creative and Performing Arts, Cultural and Academic Enrichment, Sports, Fitness and Health, and Education and Leisure. Daily programming is theme-based and rotates participants through each core area throughout the week, ensuring exposure to a diverse range of activities and skill-building opportunities.

Registration Requirements

- Submit a completed and signed registration form.
- Pay the applicable registration fee (financial assistance available) for after-school and/or summer program.
- ***Registration can only be processed with a household balance of \$0.***
- ***Any unpaid balances on RPCA accounts must be cleared for your family members to register in any other RPCA-sponsored activities.***
- Show 2 forms of proof of Alexandria City residency for viewing purposes only (for new registrants only).
- Sign a written agreement form.
- Proof of school enrollment for youth entering kindergarten.

- Proof of Age (for new registrants only – Birth Certificate/ Passport).
- Proof of Immunizations (new summer registrants not yet enrolled in school).
- OSTP Walker Permission Form.

Payments, Payment Plan, Cancellations, Refunds

Payments: Program fees are due at the time of registration. Registration cannot be processed if a household account carries an outstanding balance of \$0 or more owed to RPCA. Families may contact the program office for information about available financial assistance or scholarship opportunities.

Payment Plans: Payment plan options are available for qualifying families. Families interested in a payment plan arrangement should contact the Recreation Coordinator prior to registration. Payment plans must be agreed upon in writing and adhered to maintain enrollment in the program.

Cancellations: Families wishing to cancel enrollment must notify the program in writing. Cancellations made prior to the start date may be eligible for a partial refund. Cancellations made after the program has begun will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the refund policy below.

Refunds: Refunds are not issued for participant absences, behavioral removals, or failure to attend scheduled program sessions. Refunds for medical reasons or extraordinary circumstances may be considered with written documentation submitted to the Recreation Manager. All refund requests are subject to review and approval by program leadership and are not guaranteed. Powerful Fun Day and Kids Day Out flat-fee sessions (Winter and Spring) are non-prorated and non-refundable once the session has begun.

Program Balances

Families are responsible for always maintaining a current account balance of \$0. Unpaid balances on RPCA household accounts will prevent registration in the Out of School Time Program and any other RPCA-sponsored activity for any member of the household. Families with outstanding balances will be notified in writing and must resolve the balance before re-enrolling.

Persistent non-payment of program balances may result in suspension of services. Families experiencing financial hardship are encouraged to proactively contact the Recreation Coordinator to explore financial assistance options.

Media/Photography

The City of Alexandria Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities may photograph or video record participants during program activities for use in marketing, promotional, educational, or informational materials, including print, digital, and social media platforms. A Photographic Release waiver is included in the program registration packet. Parents or guardians who consent to photographic/video use must sign and return this release form.

Parents or guardians who do not wish for their child to be photographed or recorded must indicate this on the release form. Program staff will make reasonable efforts to honor non-consent requests. Photos or videos will not be used in a manner that identifies a child's full name alongside their image in any public-facing material without specific written consent.

Staff and volunteers are prohibited from photographing or recording participants using personal devices.

Special Activities or Fee-Based Programs

Some programs are offered with partner agencies, organizations, vendors, and/or contractors, such as Sports groups, the Health Department, or 4-H, as a special class or experience for the registered participants. In this situation, a permission slip authorization may be required. If a signed permission slip is not returned, the participant is not eligible to participate in the special activity but is directed to another activity.

On occasion and during summer camp, some specialized activities may be offered for a fee (fee assistance is available). The fee must be paid prior to attendance in the activity. Alternate activities will be provided for youth who choose not to participate in fee-based activities

Children's Records

Each program site maintains a separate record for each child enrolled in the program, including the following:

- A completed Participant Information Packet, including Medical/Social Information
- Signed Rules and Requirements form.
- A copy of custody papers or any legal papers that restrict a birth parent from picking up the child (if applicable)
- Authorized Persons Pick Up Form
- Photographic Release Form

Children's records are kept in a locked area and are treated confidentially by staff.

Parental Agreements

NOTE: In the following information, "Parent" refers to parent(s) or legal guardian(s).

Parent/guardian signs an agreement that includes:

- Authorization for emergency medical care for a child when the parent cannot be located.
- Parent agrees to immediately pick the child(ren) up from the program if the child becomes ill.
- Parent will inform the program within 24 hours if the child or a member of the family becomes ill with a reportable communicable disease.
- Waive rights to and release all claims that might be held against the City of Alexandria and its agents for all injuries or losses which may be suffered because the child participates in the program.
- Responsible for all fees for the participation of the child in the program

- If the child has not been picked up within an hour after the program has ended, RPCA staff will contact the Center for Alexandria’s Children and follow their guidance.
- Adhere to policies in the Participant Information Packet distributed to the parent/guardian.

Drop-Off Procedures

During the school year, children are dismissed from their classrooms and, where programs are located on-site, are sent directly to the recreation center or program area.

Parents are responsible for informing the after-school location supervisor if their child(ren) attend school at another location and will be arriving by bus or an alternate form of transportation. All elementary students will be met at the school bus by program staff.

When parents transport their child(ren) to programs on school holidays or during the summer vacation period, children cannot be left at the program site prior to the scheduled operating hours. A parent who leaves their child(ren) outside locations unsupervised prior to a program’s operating hours will be reported to the appropriate authorities.

Pick-up Time

Parent(s) must complete the Authorized Adult Pick-Up section as part of the participant information packet, designating adults who have parental permission to pick up their child(ren) from the program location. Parent(s) must plan to pick up the participant(s) no later than 6 pm or at the end of the program. If a parent is consistently late picking up their child(ren), it may lead to suspension from the program.

Late Pick-Up Protocols

The Out of School Time program operates from 2:00 PM to 6 PM. All children need to be picked up no later than 6 pm or at the end of the program. In case of delays, please call the program location and inform the staff of your expected time of arrival. Upon arrival, parent(s) must sign the late log for documentation.

Parents/ guardians are only allowed **two** documented late pickups during the school year:

- First offense: A written letter of notification will be issued after **two** documented late pickups.
- Second offense: Parents who are late the **third** time will receive a notification to meet with the Recreation Coordinator / Manager to discuss a new plan of action for child pickup.
- Third offense: If a parent is late for the **fourth** time, the center’s management team will initiate a process of program removal.

Staff members must follow the Late Pickup procedure and document all occurrences on the Afterschool Late Pick-up Log.

Walkers/Bikers

No child in **kindergarten through third grade** is permitted to leave the center without being signed out by the parent/guardian or a designated authorized adult. Designated adults authorized for pick up must be 18 and older and must be listed on the Participant Information Packet as a parent/ guardian or authorized adult. Any child in grades four and above who is permitted to sign out from the program and go home on their own from a program site must have a completed Afterschool Walker/Bike Permission Form on file. Once a child who has a permission slip on file signs out for the day, they may not return that day and must leave the center property. Program staff are not responsible for the safety of participants once they have been signed out and left the program premises. It is strongly recommended that all children be picked up and accompanied home by a responsible adult aged 18 or older.

Children's Attendance and Daily Records

Participants are signed in and out daily by parent/guardian or authorized adult 18+ (summer only). Participants are signed in by program staff and signed out by parent/ guardian or authorized adult 18+ during the after-school program.

Participants must regularly attend the program at least **three days per week**. If a child is not regularly attending, parents will be notified that continuous lack of attendance will result in their child(ren) being classified as inactive and will be removed from the program. Once inactive, the spot will be offered to others on the program waitlist. Parents are asked to notify the program supervisor in writing if a participant is going to be late or absent from the program. Written notification of vacation schedules falls under this category.

Afterschool Guidance – The program supervisor will contact the parent/ guardian via email and by phone to confirm participation in the program after 2 weeks of inconsistent attendance.

Summer Guidance - The program supervisor will contact the parent/ guardian via email and by phone to confirm participation in the program after a lack of daily participation.

Confidentiality Expectations

All information contained in participant records, including registration forms, medical information, behavioral reports, incident documentation, and family communications, is treated as confidential and is accessible only to authorized program staff and leadership. Children's records are maintained in a secured location at each program site.

Staff and volunteers are required to maintain the confidentiality of all participants. Information about a participant's health, family circumstances, behavioral history, or program status may not be shared with other participants, their families, or unauthorized third parties. Violations of confidentiality may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination and, where applicable, legal consequences.

Information may be disclosed when required by law (e.g., mandatory reporting of suspected child abuse), by court order, or with express written authorization from the parent or legal

guardian. All records requests from external parties must be directed to program leadership and processed in accordance with the City of Alexandria's privacy and records retention policies.

FOIA Process (Freedom of Information Act)

The City of Alexandria is subject to the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), which grants citizens the right to access certain public records. Parents or guardians who wish to request access to records related to the Out of School Time Program, including incident reports involving their child, may submit a FOIA request in accordance with the City of Alexandria's established process.

FOIA requests must be submitted in writing to the City of Alexandria's FOIA Officer or the designated records custodian for the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities. Requests should identify the specific records being sought and the desired format for delivery. The City will respond to FOIA requests within five (5) working days of receipt, as required by law, and will either provide the records, provide a response indicating when the records will be made available, or notify the requester if any records are exempt from disclosure. Certain records, including those that identify minors, contain protected health information, or are otherwise exempt under Virginia FOIA, may be withheld in whole or in part.

How to make an official Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request:

To make a request by email: FOIArequests@alexandriava.gov

To make a request via telephone, please call 703.746.3750.

[City of Alexandria, VA | Public Records Center](#)

Sick Children

Participants who have a fever, vomiting, or are suffering from severe pain or other symptoms are not permitted to attend the program. If a child has a temperature above 100, the child will not be permitted to participate on that day and must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to the program. A child will not be allowed to attend if they display any other symptoms or illness, including but not limited to recurring vomiting or diarrhea, Lice, contagious rashes, or other illness on the Virginia Department of Health's list of current Communicable Diseases. If a participant becomes ill during the program hours, the parents must arrange for their child to be picked up as soon as possible. The ill child is separated from their group until the parents arrive. **If the parent/ guardian is contacted during the school day due to an ill child and asked to pick the child up from school, the parent must pick the child up from the school before the after-school program begins.** The child will not be permitted to participate in the after-school program. **Children who did not attend the regular school day due to illness will not be allowed to participate in the after-school program for that day.**

Suspected Child Abuse

All After-school staff are mandatory reporters and are required to report any suspected child abuse. Unusual marks or bruises that appear on a child's body or suspected sexual abuse, emotional abuse, or negligence are noted in an incident report and are reported to the

Program Director. The Program Director or staff member reports this information to the Department of Human Services Child Protection Services Division (CPS) and provides all information needed to enable a social worker to investigate the matter. CPS case workers may interview children at a program site without parental permission when investigating a case.

Program Housing

Programs are held in public buildings such as recreation centers and public schools, including the use of cafeterias, gyms, and classrooms. Additional programs may be offered in city parks and playgrounds during the summer months. Any unsafe conditions are reported to the appropriate agencies to address any maintenance issues.

Proper Attire

Children should be dressed appropriately for the weather. Children should wear comfortable clothing that can be worn during active play (indoors/outdoors). Children should wear appropriate footwear for sports and play activities i.e., sneakers or tennis shoes. Sandals, boots, crocs, slides, flip flops, spiked, and other inappropriate shoes are not allowed. Children's clothes and belongings should be marked with their names. Children are encouraged to bring extra clothing/ under clothes for accidents.

Playgrounds

ACPS playgrounds, park playgrounds and City of Alexandria open spaces (parks/ fields) will be used regularly in RPCA programs. RPCA staff will check the designated area prior to usage and after usage for any safety hazards. Playgrounds, parks, and fields will be monitored for compliance with safety standards by RPCA Park Services or ACPS Facilities.

Daily Programming

Daily programming is themed and developed around the six core program areas of sports and competitive games, academic support, civic responsibility, cultural arts, personal enrichment, and safety, health, and well-being. Activities include indoor and outdoor group games, sports, exercise, arts and crafts, music and dance, table games, snack time, special guests, and homework time.

Program Expectations:

All enrolled participants are expected to attend the program regularly and engage actively and respectfully in all scheduled activities. Participants must be able to function within a group setting and follow program expectations as outlined in the Code of Conduct. Participants must maintain personal care without requiring one-on-one staff support unless formal accommodation has been approved.

Participants are expected to attend a minimum of three days per week during the school year program. Consistent and unexplained absences may result in a child being designated inactive and their enrollment slot being offered to another family on the waitlist. Parents and

guardians are responsible for communicating planned absences or schedule changes to the program supervisor in advance and in writing.

Code of Conduct

All participants, parents, guardians, and staff are expected to always uphold the program's Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct is designed to maintain a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for everyone in the programming community. The following standards apply:

Participants are expected to: follow all directions given by program staff; treat all peers, staff, facilities, and equipment with respect; remain within designated program areas at all times; refrain from any form of bullying, harassment, or threatening behavior; use appropriate language; and comply with all program rules as communicated by staff and outlined in this manual.

Parents and guardians are expected to: support the program's rules and values; always communicate respectfully with staff; honor all program policies including pick-up times and financial obligations; and respond promptly to staff communications regarding their child's participation or behavior.

Violations of the Code of Conduct will be addressed in accordance with the Tiered Behavior Plan. Repeated or egregious violations may result in suspension or removal from the program.

Rules for Appropriate Behavior (participants):

- Must be able to maintain personal care without staff support.
- Must listen, not talk, while others are speaking.
- Stay with their assigned group.
- Respect the rights and property of others.
- Participate in group activities willingly and to your fullest ability.
- Use appropriate and kind language - swear words, racist, sexual, and/or derogatory language toward others is unacceptable.
- Keep hands and body to oneself; physical aggression and physical assault are not permitted.
- Always walk while in the center/ program space.
- Do not ask others for money or items, including swapping/exchanging.
- Use restrooms properly, wash hands; putting paper in the proper receptacle.

Staff will never:

- Use physical punishment
- Be verbally abusive
- Force, withhold, or substitute food
- Give any child the authority to punish another child
- Place a child out of visual/hearing sight, in the dark, or in an unventilated place
- Punish a child for a toileting accident

Hands-Off / Limited-Touch

Purpose

This procedure establishes clear, enforceable boundaries for physical contact between staff and participants, and between participants themselves. Its goals are to:

- Protect children from physical, emotional, and sexual harm.
- Protect staff from accusations, misunderstandings, and liability.
- Eliminate ambiguity so every staff member responds the same way in the same situation.
- Ensure any physical contact that does occur is necessary, minimal, visible, and documented.

Scope

Applies to all full-time and part-time staff, seasonal recreation staff including volunteers, interns, contractors, specialty instructors, drivers, and anyone else with access to participants – at all program sites, on field trips, during transportation, and at off-site or virtual program activities.

Term	Definition
Hands-off	The default operating posture: staff do not initiate physical contact with participants and use verbal, visual, and environmental strategies instead.
Permitted contact	Narrow, listed exceptions where brief contact is necessary for safety, health, or instruction (Section 5).
Prohibited contact	Any contact listed in Section 6, without exception.
Physical intervention / restraint	Physically holding or blocking a participant to prevent imminent serious harm. An emergency measure only, never a behavior-management tool (Section 9).
Two-deep supervision	No fewer than two adults present with participants; no adult alone with a single child out of sight of others.
Line of sight / line of sound	Another adult can see, or at minimum hear, the interaction at all times.
Peer-to-peer contact	Contact between participants, including horseplay, wrestling, tackling, piggyback rides, and hitting.

Permitted Contact (Limited Exceptions)

Contact is permitted only when it falls into one of the categories below. In every case: keep it brief, keep it public, keep it above the shoulders or on the outer arm/upper back where possible, and stop when the child asks you to.

- **Immediate safety.**
- **First aid and medical response.**
- **Water safety.**
- **Instructional spotting.**
- **Age-appropriate assistance for the youngest participants or children with disabilities.**

- **Sunscreen and insect repellent.**
- **Child-initiated brief contact.**
- **Approved celebratory contact.**

Prohibited Contact – No Exceptions

- Any contact with a child's genitals, buttocks, chest, or inner thighs, or any contact that is sexual in nature or could reasonably be perceived as such.
- Kissing, extended or full-frontal hugging, lap-sitting, cuddling, tickling, wrestling, play-fighting, or massage.
- Piggyback rides, carrying, lifting, or swinging a child, except in a genuine emergency evacuation.
- Any form of corporal punishment: hitting, spanking, slapping, shaking, pinching, pushing, shoving, yanking, dragging, grabbing by the wrist/arm/collar/hair/clothing.
- Physical contact used to punish, coerce, intimidate, or force compliance.
- Contact used to physically move a non-compliant child from place to place (see Section 8 for what to do instead).
- Forced exercise, forced feeding, withholding food/water/bathroom access, or restricting movement as discipline.
- Horseplay initiated by staff.
- Staff sharing a sleeping space, sleeping bag, tent, or bed with a participant; being in a bathroom, changing area, or shower with an individual participant beyond what a documented care plan requires.
- Any contact while alone with a participant in an unobservable location.

Behavior Management

Discipline shall be constructive in nature to include using limits that are fair, consistent, and appropriate for the age; providing reasons for limits; and using positive word directions. No child is forced to assume an uncomfortable position, be restricted in movement, be enclosed in a confined space, or be assigned exercise for punishment.

In the best interest of the program and its participants, program staff reserves the right to enforce restrictive actions on a participant who is causing a disturbance in the program. Restrictive action may include meetings with parents or guardians, temporary exclusion from activities, or suspension from current and/or subsequent programs. In the case of a suspension for a period of more than three days, the parent will receive notification from the Deputy Director of Recreation Services regarding the status of their child at recreation centers and programs

Tiered Behavior Plan

The Out of School Time Program uses a tiered behavior plan to address a range of participant behaviors in a consistent, fair, and supportive manner. The tiered plan is designed to reinforce positive behavior, provide early intervention for emerging concerns, and ensure appropriate consequences for more serious or persistent behavioral issues. Staff implement

the plan progressively, beginning with the least restrictive intervention and escalating as necessary based on the nature and frequency of the behavior.

- **Tier 1 – Universal Support:** Positive reinforcement, verbal redirection, and reminders of program expectations provided to all participants as part of routine program delivery.
- **Tier 2 – Targeted Intervention:** Individualized behavior support for participants displaying repeated or escalating behaviors. May include behavior contracts, parent/guardian notification, staff check-ins, and modified participation plans.
- **Tier 3 – Intensive Support / Removal:** Reserved for serious, persistent, or dangerous behaviors. May include formal suspension, program removal, and referral for additional assessment or therapeutic support. Program fees are non-refundable in the event of removal due to behavioral violations.

Behavior Management Protocol:

- 1st Offense (Verbal Warning)
- 2nd Offense (one-on-one conversation with participant)
- 3rd Offense (redirection)
- 4th Offense (separation from group/ activity)
- Staff must document all incidents in the official City of Alexandria Incident Report.
- Staff must inform the program supervisor of all incidents.

Parents will be notified of disciplinary issues by phone or by parent conference. Children who receive three disciplinary reports are subject to dismissal from the program, depending on the severity of behaviors. Alexandria Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities reserve the right to immediately dismiss any child.

Bullying

In the Commonwealth of Virginia, bullying is defined as "any aggressive and unwanted behavior that is intended to harm, intimidate, or humiliate the victim; involves a real or perceived power imbalance between the aggressor and aggressors and victim; and is repeated over time or causes severe emotional trauma. "Bullying" includes cyberbullying. "Bullying" does not include ordinary teasing, horseplay, argument, or peer conflict.

At every City of Alexandria after-school and summer camp, bullying is inexcusable, and we have a firm policy against all types of bullying. We work together as a team to ensure that campers gain self-confidence, make new friends, and go home with great memories.

Unfortunately, people who are bullied may not have the same potential to get the most out of their camp experience. Our leadership addresses all incidents of bullying seriously and trains staff to promote communication with their staff and their campers so both staff and campers will be comfortable alerting us to any problems during their camp experience and between camp seasons. We may need your help to put an end to bullying at our camp! If your camper comes home and tells you that he or she is being bullied or has witnessed bullying, please communicate this to the staff. Every person has the right to expect to have the best possible experience at camp, and by working together as a team to identify and manage

bullying, we can help ensure that all campers and staff have a wonderful summer. Please reference our Behavioral Rules.

Inclusion

The Department of Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities is committed to providing innovative, inclusive, accessible, and affordable programs that enhance the health, well-being, and quality of life for Alexandria residents with all abilities. The City of Alexandria is committed to making all reasonable accommodations as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Parents or guardians seeking accommodation for their child must submit a written ADA accommodation request prior to enrollment or as soon as the need is identified. Requests should be directed to the ADA Coordinator, Jackie Person, at Jackie.person@alexandriava.gov or by calling 703.746.5423. The more detailed information provided regarding the child's needs, current supports, and resources, the better positioned staff will be to respond effectively. Accommodations are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

If it is determined that the after-school program is not the appropriate setting for your child, an assessment may be required, and a possible program transfer to the Therapeutic Recreation program or Youth Achieving Greatness Inclusion program. Pending availability in either program.

Foods

A healthy meal and/or snack is provided daily to the participants enrolled at eligible locations for the federal At-Risk Afterschool Snack/Supper Program and/or Summer Food Service Program. A monthly menu is available to all participants and posted at the Center for parents to review. All provided food meets USDA-recommended guidelines. The daily menu is subject to change. Children may bring their own meal or snack to the program, but it must be shelf-stable and not require refrigeration or heating.

Participants with food allergies must notify center staff and may need to plan to send appropriate food for their child when they cannot eat the food provided. At no time are children forced to eat. Parents must provide lunch on school holidays when children are in attendance for the entire day.

Children are not permitted access to the vending machines without a parent with them.

Medication

With written authorization from a parent/guardian and a signature from the child's physician, life-saving medications including inhalers and EpiPens for documented life-threatening medical conditions will be accepted and stored in a secured location in the program office. These medications will accompany staff on all off-site activities in a designated medical backpack. All other medication requests will be handled on a case-by-case basis. The program does not administer over-the-counter medications without documented medical authorization. **Additional medication administration procedures and first aid protocols to be updated and inserted here.**

First Aid

At least one staff member on duty at all times is trained in CPR and First Aid. A stocked first aid kit is maintained at each program site and is brought on all off-site activities including field trips and swim trips. A flashlight, cell phone, and battery-operated radio are kept on site for emergency use.

Sunscreen

Parents are encouraged to send spray sunscreen with their children for all outdoor activities. Staff will supervise youth while they apply the sunscreen for themselves. Sunscreen is also kept on site for community use. If a child does not have their own personal sunscreen. Staff will take emergency information and medication (inhaler/ EpiPen) for each child and staff on field trips. A first aid kit is also taken by the staff on the trip.

Parent Concerns:

Any Parent/Guardian concerns should be shared with the Program Coordinator as soon as possible. The Program Coordinator and the parent/guardian will discuss the concerns and work together to find a resolution to the issues.

Any other medication requests are handled on a case-by-case basis.

Hand washing

Children and staff are to wash their hands before and after eating any food and after toileting. Children and staff are to wash their hands after all outdoor and craft activities.

Personal Belongings/ Items of Value

Participants are discouraged from bringing games and toys from home it may disrupt planned activities or negatively impact group dynamics. If a participant brings personal belongings/ items of value to the program, they will be asked to keep the item in their backpack. If they do not follow this instruction and activities are disrupted, the item will be confiscated and kept in the administrative office and returned to the parent. The program staff is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

Electronic Devices and Cell Phones

School-issued tablets and laptops are permitted for use in the center/ program at designated times, including academic support time, for structured enrichment activities, or transitional times at the start or end of the day with staff supervision. Cell phones, if brought to program, must be kept in the child's backpack, and only used with staff permission; parents should call the center to speak with their child. Smart watches are not permitted during program time.

STAFF ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

Key Positions:

- Recreation Manager II
- Recreation Coordinator
- Recreation Leader III (part-time)
- Recreation Leader II (part-time/seasonal)
- Recreation Leader I (part-time)
- Recreation Leader I (seasonal)

Staff Training:

All Recreation Leaders are now **required** to obtain **20 hours** of training each year. The training includes the following, but is not limited to:

- First aid/CPR
- Developmental Assets
- OSTP Standard Operation Standards/ Local Standards
- Child abuse and neglect
- Playground safety
- Cooperative/ group game development
- Health and Communicable Disease
- Program development and management (supervision, behavior management)
- Policy & Procedures
- Ethics Training
- Safe Place
- Run.Hide.Fight
- Onboarding (new employees)

Volunteers

Volunteers working in the Afterschool Program that provides support to specific programs in the centers or camps, such as homework assistance, classes, sports, or other program activities for more than one-time special events, are required to apply and complete a criminal background check. Volunteers also include Therapist, Case Managers, and all other supportive staff who are not RPCA or Alexandria City Public School (ACPS) employees. All volunteers are supervised by paid recreation staff. A program supervisor has the right to terminate any volunteer's assignment at any time if their conduct is not in accordance with the goals and objectives of the program. Volunteers must apply and complete a background check annually.

Background Check (Therapist, Outside Support Staff, etc.)

All individuals who work with or have unsupervised access to participants in the Out of School Time Program are required to complete a criminal background check prior to beginning their assignment. This requirement applies to all RPCA staff, volunteers, contractors, therapists, case managers, and any other outside support personnel providing services within the program, regardless of the frequency or nature of their involvement.

Background checks must be renewed annually for all volunteers and outside support staff. Paid RPCA employees are subject to background check requirements in accordance with City of Alexandria Human Resources policy. Any individual whose background check reveals a disqualifying offense will not be permitted to work with program participants. Results are maintained confidentially in the individual's personnel or volunteer record.

Outside agencies or organizations providing support staff, therapists, or other specialized personnel are responsible for ensuring their staff have completed the required background checks and must provide written confirmation to program leadership prior to the individual's first day working in the program. All outside support staff, including therapists, are always supervised by paid RPCA recreation staff while on program premises.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ADMINISTRATION

Cancellation, Delay, or Early Release

If the program or camp is delayed or cancelled due to severe weather, power supply damage, or other unforeseen circumstances, you will be notified by telephone and/or email. It will also be posted on the City of Alexandria eNews and social media platforms. If camp must be dismissed early for any reason, all parents will be notified by phone and/or email immediately.

First Aid and CPR Training and Supplies

At least one staff member on duty is trained in First Aid/CPR. A first aid kit is kept on site. The kit is taken on all field trips. A flashlight, cell phone, and battery-operated radio are kept on site.

Severe Injuries/Illness

When a participant is severely injured/ill (when more than simple first aid or care is needed), staff will contact at least one person on the emergency contact list provided by the parent/guardian. If warranted, staff call Emergency Medical Services (EMS) to attend to the injured participant. If transportation to the hospital is deemed necessary by the medical professionals, a staff member will travel to the hospital with the child and stay with them until a parent/guardian arrives.

The City of Alexandria **DOES NOT** provide medical insurance for participants. In the event of illness or injury requiring transportation, treatment, hospitalization, and/or surgery, the family's medical insurance must be used.

Any major injury or accident that occurs during scheduled After-school Program hours will be handled in the following manner:

- 911 will be called immediately.
- Parent/Guardian will be called next.
- Based upon the professional decision of the EMT unit, the child may be transported to the closest medical facility for immediate care.
- EMT may advise the parent/guardian or counselor how to care for the child and what additional follow-up care is required.

Some examples are the following, but limited to what is stated:

American Red Cross protocol, which identifies situations when 911 should be called:

- Breathing and choking: The child is choking, having trouble breathing, or has a bluish or purplish tint to their skin or lips.
- Unconsciousness or seizure: The child is unresponsive, unconscious, or experiencing a seizure.
- Serious injury: The child has a serious injury (for example, a vehicle accident, head injury with loss of consciousness, or severe bleeding).
- Poisoning: The child has ingested poison or overdosed on medication.
- Severe pain: The child experiences increasing or severe pain.
- Fever: A child under 3 months has a fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher, or any child has a fever accompanied by symptoms such as lethargy or confusion.
- Dehydration: The child shows signs of severe dehydration, such as lack of urination, sunken eyes, or no tears when crying.
- When in doubt: If there is any uncertainty about the severity of the situation, 911 is called for guidance and support.

Concussion Awareness

The purpose of the Concussion Policy is to establish clear and consistent guidance concerning suspected concussions for participants in the Department of Alexandria Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities programs. All Alexandria Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities staff and volunteers are expected to adhere to this policy. The safety, health, and well-being of all participants is a priority. This policy will be reviewed on a biannual basis.

Four-Step Action Plan

If a participant is suspected of having experienced a concussion, whoever is serving in a supervisory role of the program should follow the 4 Steps outlined in the HEADS-Up Action Plan:

- Athletes should be removed from play. The participant should be moved as little as possible, while making sure that they are safe and out of harm's way. Employees should seek emergency medical care if deemed necessary.
- The supervisor should recommend that the person is evaluated by a health care professional. They should not judge the seriousness of the injury.
- Where appropriate, concussion care should be included in the Accident/Incident Report to document and inform administration about the occurrence. Parents or guardians should be informed about the possibility of concussion and directed to the resources located on CDC Heads Up <https://www.cdc.gov/HeadsUp/>.
- If a concussion is suspected, the athlete should be removed from play for the remainder of the day. The athlete should only return to play with permission from a health care professional.

Emergency Drills

Fire drills and shelter-in-place drills are completed and recorded twice a year. During such drills, roll call is taken for all children and staff, and children's emergency information is in the staff's possession during the drill. Arrangements will be made if evacuation to another site is required due to an emergency.

Injury or Incident Report

An injury report is maintained for each injury to a child. An injury report includes the date and time of injury, name of child, description of injury (type and location of body), circumstance of injury, treatment, date, and time parents notified, and staff signatures. Any child transported by ambulance is accompanied by a staff person, and the child's file is taken to the hospital.

In the case of a physical or verbal altercation or any other potentially harmful incident, staff will record all pertinent information, including the date and time of the incident, name of child(ren) involved, a narrative describing the details of the incident, the actions taken by staff, the date and time parents are notified, and signatures of the staff who witnessed or handled the situation.

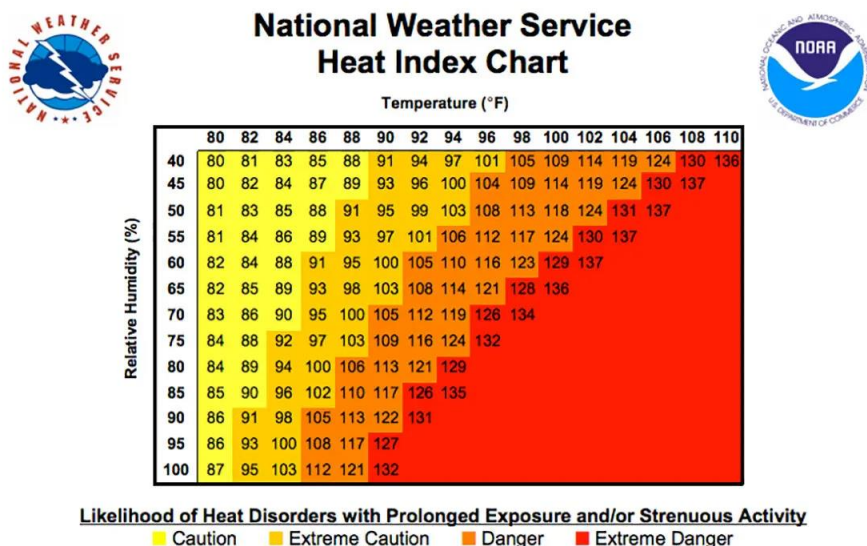
Heat Advisory Policy

RPCA employees are responsible for being familiar with the guidelines related to the operation of outdoor activities during extreme weather conditions. Employees should review the Heat policy each season.

Contractors must follow City and RPCA guidelines for conducting activities during extreme weather conditions.

RPCA follows the City of Alexandria policy for extreme heat and poor air quality days by eliminating strenuous outdoor activities on a hot and extreme heat day.

Poor or extreme heat is described as a heat index above 100 degrees, with the heat index remaining above the criteria for a minimum of 2 hours. Code yellow is defined as 80-90 degrees with more than 70% humidity, and Code red is defined as 90-100. See the map below.



Procedure

For days when we are in the “caution” category (yellow) and “extreme caution” (dark yellow), children should receive a **5–10-minute rest and fluid break every 20 minutes of activity. Breaks should occur indoors (air-conditioned) or in well-shaded areas.** For days when we are in the danger category (orange and “extreme danger” category (red), activities for very young children should be moved indoors or cancelled. Older children may participate in outdoor activities with modifications and plenty of breaks.

When participants are outside on weather-coded days the activities should be non-strenuous and monitored.

Drinks such as water and sports drinks should be assessable for participants while outside during hot and extreme heat days.

Decisions about field trips under these circumstances and the possibility of lightning are made on a case-by-case basis in conjunction with information from the National Weather Service, media weather forecasts, and weather information. In addition, the length of the bus ride and trip destination (outdoors, swimming pool, or inside) are considered and decided by the program manager or/and supervisor on duty

Roles and Responsibilities:

All RPCA facility staff shall be familiar with this policy. Staff will be current with first aid certification. All RPCA facility managers shall ensure that signage is in place and have the authority to make accommodations for special requests when and where feasible.

TRIPS & TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION

Field Trips

Field trips are typically scheduled during programming hours and require a signed parental permission slip and may require a fee (fee assistance is NOT available). For trips requiring vehicular transportation, Alexandria City Public School (ACPS) buses, Recreation Department vehicles, or charter buses are used to transport youth to and from field trip locations. All vehicles used for transportation meet the safety standards set by the Department of Motor Vehicles and are kept in satisfactory condition to ensure the safety of the children. Drivers are ACPS or contracted staff with appropriate permits to drive buses or vehicles. Participants are NOT transported in staff-owned vehicles.

While on trips and when necessary to cross streets, participants cross at a corner and crosswalk or other designated safe crossing points if no corner or crosswalk is available. Staff will take emergency information and medication (inhaler/ EpiPen) for each child and staff on field trips. A first aid kit is also taken by the staff on the trip.

Staff may plan some walking trips to locations nearby, such as a fire station or pool, and/or use public transportation for a smaller group to coach youth in self-sufficiency and life skills.

Staffing Ratios for Field Trips

The standard staff-to-participation ratio is maintained or enhanced for all off-site activities. For field trips, a **minimum ratio of 1 staff member per 10 participants is required. For swim trips, a minimum ratio of 1 staff member per 8 participants is required**, in addition to the presence of certified lifeguards on duty at the aquatic facility.

Staff must carry emergency contact information, a first aid kit, and any required medications (inhaler/EpiPen) for each participant and staff member during all off-site activities. Transportation is provided by ACPS buses, City of Alexandria vehicles, or charter buses meeting all applicable safety standards. Participants are not transported in staff-owned personal vehicles. All vehicular transportation is conducted by ACPS or City employees with appropriate permits.

For swim trips, participants will be swim-tested and grouped according to ability. Children in non-swimmer or beginner groups will be restricted to designated shallow areas. Life jackets will be made available where possible. Staff will always maintain a headcount system for all participants during aquatic activities.

Swimming

Children are only allowed to swim in swimming pools where there are lifeguards on duty. A signed parental permission form for swimming is required before a child is allowed to swim. Children will be swim tested each week (summer only) if they want to swim in the deeper portions of the pool. This is not mandatory if a child does not want to swim in the deeper sections. In some facilities, life jackets are made available to children who struggle with swimming, but we cannot guarantee their availability due to the use by other programs. Staff have a system for accounting for children and the depth of water they may enter. **For swimming trips, a minimum ratio of 1 staff member per 8 participants is required.**

Contact Information

Important Numbers

Recreation Coordinator	Ayannah Arrington	Charles Houston	703.746.5552
Recreation Coordinator	Cisco Fabian	Leonard Armstrong	703.746.5554
Recreation Coordinator	Candice Alexander	Mount Vernon	703.746.5556
Recreation Coordinator	Jametta Pettiway	Patrick Henry	703.746.5557
Recreation Coordinator	VACANT	William Ramsay	703.746.3331
Recreation Manager I	Dorcas Arthur	Nannie J. Lee	703.746.5424
Recreation Coordinator	Latoya Sebree	Youth Activities	703.746.5506
Recreation Manager II	Jamie Aylor	Youth Activities	703.746.5411
ADA/Assessments	Jackie Person	Nannie J. Lee	703.746.5423