

UNACCOMPANIED MINORS POLICY

The safety and well-being of all visitors to Finlay Park and City of Columbia Parks is a top priority. To promote a safe and family-friendly environment, any person seventeen (17) years of age or younger must be accompanied by a parent, legal guardian, or responsible adult twenty-one (21) years of age or older to enter or remain in Finlay Park after 5:00 p.m. seven (7) days per week.

This policy shall be in effect seven (7) days per week, and may be modified for special events, permitted activities, or other circumstances as determined by the Director of Parks and Recreation or their designee.

Park staff, security personnel, or law enforcement officers may request proof of age or identification when necessary to enforce this policy. Individuals who are unable or unwilling to provide requested information may be denied entry or required to leave the park.

Any adult serving as a chaperone must remain within the park and actively supervise the minors in their care at all times. A minimum ratio of one (1) adult chaperone for every five (5) minors shall be maintained. Groups exceeding five (5) minors must provide additional adult chaperones to maintain the required ratio.

Minors may be required to provide the name and telephone number of their parent, legal guardian, or supervising adult upon request by park staff, security personnel, or law enforcement officers. The City reserves the right to verify such information as necessary.

Any minor engaging in prohibited conduct, including but not limited to fighting, disorderly conduct, vandalism, harassment, trespassing, destruction of property, violation of park rules, or other disruptive behavior will be asked to leave the park. If the minor fails to comply, law enforcement will be contacted. Serious violations may result in involvement of law enforcement and/or issuance of a trespass notice as permitted by law.

Organized group activities, including school-sponsored events, church groups, summer camps, athletic events, corporate outings, and other pre-approved programs, as well as minors engaged in employment or internships, are exempt from this policy when operating under established supervision and chaperone procedures.

Notice of this policy shall be posted at park entrances, on the City of Columbia website, the Finlay Park website, and through other communication methods deemed appropriate by the Parks and Recreation Department.

The Director of Parks and Recreation or their designee may grant exceptions to modify or temporarily suspend this policy when circumstances warrant in consultation with the Chief of Police and/or City Administration.