



# TOWN OF VAN BUREN

## PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

7350 Canton Street  
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[www.townofvanburen.com](http://www.townofvanburen.com)

February 2025

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the 2025 Summer Playground Program! We wanted to explain the department's policies pertaining to this program in full so you will know what to expect this summer. Please read this letter over carefully and fill out papers at the bottom of the letter; if you have any questions, feel free to contact the park office.

In an effort to more closely safeguard your children, we are attaching a form we would like each parent to fill out and return to the playground, if one has not been filled out already. **(One child per form please!** Feel free to photocopy this form as necessary.) You are being requested to inform us whether your child is to be allowed to leave the playground site by his or her own volition or must stay until the end of the playground day. Please be aware that we will follow the instructions you send on this form to the letter, and any variations of these instructions must be **sent to the playground site in writing on the day they are to occur (please see the attached form).**

Upon arrival, children will need to **check in with the Playground Leader** so his/her attendance can be recorded. If your child is not sure who their playground leader is, any staff member will point them to the right person! At the end of the playground program each day, children will again be gathered to a central location, "walkers" will be dismissed, then children and staff will wait together for the remaining children to be picked up. Children **MUST** be picked up by the **2:00p.m.** dismissal time (except for the children in the extension program).

**There are absolutely no early drop offs before specified time (depending on time frame the child is paid for) We will also be charging for late pick-ups. For every 15 minutes late, a \$10 fee will be incurred, per child. Please realize that our staff members have other jobs. You will receive one warning before charges begin. Payment must be received, by the park office, before the child returns to the playground the following day.**

Is it possible for a child to leave a playground site without being noticed by a staff member? Unfortunately, try as we might - yes, it is possible. For this reason, we will impress upon your child/children that they may **NOT** leave the playground site, **even with parental permission, WITHOUT FIRST BEING CHECKED OUT BY THE PLAYGROUND LEADER!** To do so will result in the child's **two-day suspension** from the playground. We do not mean to be harsh, but we feel it is paramount to your child's safety to make every effort to know where he/she is at all times. Please reinforce this to your child, and understand that we will follow this policy **without exception!**

**PHOTOS** - On some occasions we may take pictures of the children in the program and use them on our web site, in newspaper articles, or in other materials promoting Van Buren Park and the Summer Playground Program. If you **DO NOT** wish for your child's picture to be used in any such material, please contact the Parks & Recreation Office in writing, and we will make sure their image is not published.

**Cell Phone Usage:** The policy we have with our staff states that they may have a cell phone on them, but they should only use their cell phone in case of an emergency or in urgent, job-related circumstances. We would ask that the kids follow the same policy, as well. While we do not mind if kids have a cell phone **that they keep in their lunch bag or backpack**, they should only be using the cell phone in case of emergencies. If cell phones do not remain in a bag they will be placed in a box by the staff until the end of the day. (The kids are at the program to play and interact with other kids, not talk on a cell phone all day.) However, we are not responsible for anything lost/stolen, etc. For this reason, we encourage the kids not to bring anything other than a lunch, water bottle, and sunscreen.

**Discipline Policy:**

Lastly, it should be mentioned that there is a discipline policy that all staff are required to follow regarding all children participating in the program. Generally, most misbehavior is handled with the child being "sat out" of an activity for 15 minutes, etc. Reoccurring behavioral issues will be handled in the following manner:

**1st Incident** -- Parent contacted, child dismissed for the remainder of the day, and for the entire day following.

**2nd Incident** -- Parent contacted, and child will not be allowed back to the program for **FIVE (5)** days.

**3rd Incident** -- Parent contacted, child dismissed for the **remainder of the playground program!**

Serious infractions, **such as striking other children or staff**, use of obscenities towards other children, or flagrant and/or continual disregard of staff requests will be handled by the Playground Coordinator or Recreation Supervisor on a case by case basis.

**NOTE:** There will be **NO REFUNDS** for a child's dismissal from the program!

**\*\*\*\*If an occurrence is deemed to be more severe than just a one day or five-day suspension, that will be up to our discretion. \*\*\*\***

Extreme infractions, such as a child striking a staff member, leaving the playground site unattended (without permission), finding a participant in possession of an illegal substance or item (i.e., a weapon), etc., will be handled by the participant's IMMEDIATE expulsion from the playground program.

We will also not be tolerating verbal abuse by anyone. This includes children, parents, etc. This will result in the children's immediate expulsion from the playground with no refunds.

Children will have playground program rules explained to them the first day, and these rules will also be posted at each playground site.

**FOOD:** We have a LOT of kids with food allergies this summer. We are asking that parents don't send in food to be shared with the rest of the camp. While most of the kids would probably be okay eating the food, it doesn't make it fair to the rest of the kids that can't have it. We would also appreciate it if parents talk with their children about not sharing their food/trading their food with other campers while at the playground program.

**\*\* Please make sure that your child brings a bagged lunch and at least one drink for the day. I would suggest a few water bottles each day due to the fact that we have little shelter at the pavilion. Please make sure to send children with sunscreen but please be advised that our staff CAN NOT apply this to the children!**

**Sick days:** If a child does not feel well or is sick, please keep them home until they feel better. If a child gets sick or does not feel well after they have been dropped off, the child will be sent home.

**FIELD TRIPS:**

There are three scheduled field trips for the summer:

**Bowling (Flamingo): Thursday, July 10**

**Hollywood Theater: Thursday, July 17 (children need to arrive at the playground site by 8:15am this day)**

**Sky Zone: Thursday, July 24**

\* For Sky Zone – an online waiver must be filled out at least one week before the field trip. Please take care of this as soon as possible so you child/children are still able to attend.

Children attending field trips must ride the bus **TO** and **FROM** each field trip. **THIS IS FOR YOUR CHILD'S SAFETY! Parents may not drop children off at field trip sites or pick them up from trip sites!**

Refunds for the field trips will only be issued if notice of participant cancellation is received by the Friday before the actual field trip. Refunds will only be half the original cost.

**Once the registration deadline has passed, we will make NO SUBSTITUTIONS** ("My son can't go on the trip now, so can his friend go?") We get many requests like this, and while we appreciate the motivation behind them, we simply can not allow substitutions. Once the registration deadline has passed, the list is double-checked for accuracy. Then, the children at each playground site are broken down into groups based on gender, age, etc., and a staff member assigned to each group. If we start allowing substitutions (and based on the requests we get, there would be many), it increases the opportunity for human error. When it comes to the safety of your children that is the **last** thing we want to do!

Thank you for your cooperation! We wish we did not have to be so strict about some matters, but feel it is imperative to ensure a safe, happy, fun experience for all participants! If you have any questions, comments, or concerns - we would like to hear from you! Please contact the park office at 315-638-4727, weekdays, from 8:30am.-4:00pm.

Enjoy the summer!

Van Buren Park & Recreation Staff

# Town of Van Buren Parks and Recreation Department

## PERMISSION FOR CHILD TO LEAVE PLAYGROUND SITE

\_\_\_\_\_, has my permission to leave  
(PRINT CHILD'S NAME)

the \_\_\_\_\_ playground site during the following circumstances:  
(NAME OF PLAYGROUND SITE & TIMES)

**(Please initial each applicable)**

1. Whenever he/she chooses. \_\_\_\_\_ (assuming your child is a walker)
2. At 2:00pm. each day, when the program is over - **not before**. \_\_\_\_\_ (assuming your child is a walker)
3. At lunch time each day. \_\_\_\_\_
4. **Under no circumstances** is my child allowed to leave the playground site, prior to being picked up by myself, the babysitter, etc. \_\_\_\_\_

My child **MAY NOT** obtain a ride home with the following individuals:

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\*\* If you do not fill out and return this form (or while we are waiting for its return), we will assume that your child may **not** leave the playground for any reason (circumstance #4), and will not allow him or her to do so.

**If you need for us to deviate from your wishes on this form for any reason, please send a note, signed by you, with the child on that particular day.**

**\*\* NOTE: Once your child is off of the playground site grounds, the Town of Van Buren is NOT RESPONSIBLE for monitoring him / her.**

**FOR VAN BUREN EXTENSION PROGRAM**

Please read all of the information regarding the extension program below. You must initial next to each one and mail/bring in with registration form, before we will take payment.

\_\_\_ I have read the Parent Letter

\_\_\_ I understand the disciplinary procedures

\_\_\_ The children will be banded (wristbands) for the entire summer, by week. If the child takes off his/her wristband or it is removed, it is the parent's responsibility to pay for another before the child can come back to the playground. You can either buy them and put them on each day, as we will only give them out per week, or you can stop in and buy them at the park office at \$0.75 apiece. The children from 9:00am - 2:00pm will be wearing red/pink bands for the summer. The children from 7:30am-6:00 pm will be wearing green bands for the summer. The children from 8:30am-5:00pm will be banded yellow.

\_\_\_ I understand the late pick up policy and realize there will be charges when I am late.

Participant's Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Please list below the person/persons and their phone number, other than yourself that are allowed to pick up your child:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\* If anyone, besides the individuals listed above, will be picking up the child, a note with a name and phone number must be provided to the Recreation Leader that morning.

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OFFICE USE ONLY

Recreation Leader \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



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### Photo/Video Image Use Consent and Release

Participation in or attendance at programs or events sponsored by the Town of Van Buren Parks and Recreation Department constitutes the voluntary consent of the participant or attendee: (a) be photographed, filmed or videotaped by a Department representative and (b) the reproduction and use of all such photographs, digital images, films and likenesses for publicity purposes in publications, brochures, advertisements, promotional and marketing materials and all other media venues including the World Wide Web, all without further notice or compensation to participant or attendee who hereby releases the Department all proprietary rights and copyrights in all such photographs, digital images, films and likenesses (including negative, positives and prints) which shall be and remain the property of the Department.

I do / do not give my permission for (Participant's Name)

\_\_\_\_\_ picture to be taken/used in upcoming news releases or on social media.