



**Title:**  
**VEHICLE/EQUIPMENT &  
PARKING PLACARD POLICY**

<b>Subject:</b> TRAVEL, VEHICLES & EQUIPMENT & PARKING	<b>Page:</b> 1 of 11	<b>Policy Number:</b> 08.20.00
<b>Category:</b> DISTRICTWIDE POLICY	<b>Approval Date:</b> 09/01/2013	<b>Last Revised Date:</b> 06/13/2018

**POLICY STATEMENT:**

All Forest Preserve District of Cook County (the “District”) departments, supervisors, and vehicle users are directed to adhere to the following District Vehicle/Equipment Policy. The District considers the use of vehicles and/or equipment part of the working environment. The District is committed to safe responsible employee driving behavior that reduces the risk of personal injury and property loss.

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this policy is to outline the proper usage of vehicles and/or equipment, parking placards and parade floats, and to outline the technological device removal guidelines for the Forest Preserve District of Cook County.

**AFFECTED AREAS:**

This policy applies to all individuals that operate District vehicles and/or equipment.

**DEFINITIONS:**

**GPS:** A GPS tracking unit is a device that uses the Global Positioning System to determine the precise location of a vehicle, person, or other asset to which it is attached and to record the position of the asset at regular intervals.

**Parking Placard:** A parking placard is a standard District issued document that may be used in order to avoid receiving a District Law Enforcement issued vehicle parking citation.

**Technological Device:** Any item, device, unit of hardware, piece of equipment or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of District staff or that is capable of providing input to, or receiving input from, another piece of equipment regarding an employee’s location, use, and/or activity. Such devices may include, but not be limited to police radios, cell phones, and GPS devise.

**Vehicle/Equipment:** These guidelines govern District owned, leased, and rented vehicles including, but not limited to, automobiles, pick-up trucks, light duty trucks, sport utility vehicles, vans, parade floats, heavy duty trucks, trailers, tractors, grass-cutting equipment, and all other District owned, leased, rented, miscellaneous vehicles and equipment (*hereafter referred to as “Equipment”*).

**PROCEDURE/PROCESS:**

**1) Maintaining Inventory List Of District Vehicles And Equipment:**

- a. Each department head will designate the individual employee or specific program function requiring each District vehicle and piece of equipment for District business.
- b. Any District vehicle or piece of equipment not assigned to a specific individual will be considered a pool unit.

- c. All departments, through their Supervisor, will be required to maintain a current list of assigned and pool District vehicles and equipment which will be reported to the Vehicle Coordinator annually. Any additions or alterations to vehicle assignments must be reported in writing to the Vehicle Coordinator within five business days. Each department vehicle and equipment list must provide information on each unit, its assignment (individual vs. pool) and parking location. The list will also provide the home address of all employees personally assigned District vehicles which are authorized for take home use and justification for need of such vehicle(s). This information will be reviewed by the Vehicle Coordinator and the Vehicle Steering Committee quarterly.

## 2) Authorized Use Of District Vehicles:

- a. Unless expressly exempted by the General Superintendent, and approved by the Vehicle Steering Committee, all District Vehicles must carry a municipal license plate.
- b. Vehicle usage logs or trip sheets must be maintained for each District vehicle and include the following information: name of driver, date(s) used, beginning and ending odometer reading, destination and purpose of use.
- c. Only authorized passengers are permitted to ride in District Vehicles. Non-District individuals such as volunteers, spouses, and children should not be passengers in a District Vehicle unless they are involved in the conduct of business.
- d. District vehicles are to be assigned to individuals who, in the required course of their employment, need vehicles to complete their required duties on behalf of the District.
- e. Employees driving District vehicles may be disciplined for misconduct discovered through the use of GPS tracking devices. Disciplinary decisions may be based solely, or in part, on data gathered from GPS devices.

## 3) Eligibility For Vehicle Assignment:

- a. **Take Home Assignment.** District employees may be authorized to take home District vehicles in order to be immediately available to respond to a situation when the employee is considered to be “off duty”. Take home authorization may be granted in the following instances:
  1. Each Department Head may be authorized to the take home use of a District vehicle since he/she is required to be on 24-hour call and immediately respond to various situations.
  2. Take home use of a District vehicle to support operational needs must be approved by the Department Head. The Department Head will grant such approval on an operational needs basis only. District employees with operational needs to take home District vehicles must submit a signed disclosure statement declaring the type, year, model and license plate number of the District vehicle as well as the vehicle’s overnight parking location. Such employees must acknowledge that they have the option to use their own vehicles and receive mileage reimbursement.
  3. Authorization may be granted for take home use of District vehicles for programs that are seasonal in nature. However, authorization may be granted by the Department Head for specific seasons or months only in which the programs fall. The Department Head must provide the Vehicle Steering Committee with a schedule of seasons or special programs specific to their department on an annual basis.

4. Department Heads may grant occasional take home use of administrative District pool vehicles by staff under exceptional and occasional circumstances. These would include, but not be limited to, circumstances relative to the safety of the employee and more practical use of an employee's time.
5. Employees authorized to take home vehicles shall not use the vehicles for any reason other than to conduct District business. Personal use of take home vehicles may subject the employee to discipline, up to and including termination.

All other District vehicles and equipment must be based at department designated parking locations after working hours. Members of the Vehicle Steering Committee will make periodic visits to ensure department compliance of this directive.

The primary use of a District vehicle should be restricted to the purpose presented in the department's vehicle list. Unauthorized use of District vehicles and equipment may result in the appropriate disciplinary action as determined by the Department Head, and may include discipline up to and including termination.

- b. **Pool Assignment:** Pool vehicles are to be assigned on a periodic basis to individuals when the District work assignment requires a vehicle in order to properly conduct District 4 business. A vehicle Disclosure Form and daily log shall be used and remain on file in the Department for all pool vehicles which are taken home overnight.
- c. **No employee shall be authorized to drive a District vehicle unless he/she:**
  1. Possesses a current, valid Illinois driver's license with the correct class for the vehicle driven;
  2. Is 18 or older;
  3. Is 25 or older, if driving a leased or rented vehicle;
  4. Is medically and physically fit to drive the vehicle safely;
  5. Is free of any prior conviction for driving under the influence of alcohol, drugs, reckless driving or any driving-related felony within the previous year; and
  6. Complies with all the requirements of the Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1986, if operating a commercial vehicle.

#### 4) **Use of Private Vehicles For District Business:**

- a. District employees, with the prior permission of their Department Head, may use their private vehicle to conduct official District business. Department Heads shall only approve use of private vehicles for District business when it is in the best interest of the District to do so.
- b. Each employee shall comply with all applicable state and federal insurance regulations. A valid proof of insurance is required to operate a private vehicle and a copy must be filed with the Vehicle Coordinator and the Chief Financial Officer.
- c. Mileage reimbursement rates will be based on the District **EMPLOYEE TRAVEL POLICY** (*separate document*).

- 5) **Accident/Collision Procedures:** The following accident/collision procedures are to be followed by drivers involved in accidents or collisions while operating a District or personal vehicle on District business:
- a. In the case of an emergency, call 9-1-1.
  - b. **District Vehicle:** Employees driving District vehicles who are involved in an accident or collision must do the following:
    1. Request that all parties remain and render assistance at the scene of the accident or incident, if possible, until a law enforcement representative has released them, and alcohol and/or drug testing is completed.
    2. Promptly report all vehicle accidents or collisions involving employees and/or District vehicles to the local police department and the employee's immediate supervisor. If applicable, report the accident to the District's Police Department at (708) 771-1001.
    3. Refrain from making statements regarding the accident or collision to anyone other than the investigating law enforcement officials, appropriate District officials.
    4. Remain at the site of the accident or collision in order to submit to a drug and/or alcohol test in accordance with the District Alcohol and Controlled Substances Use Policy or the appropriate collective bargaining agreement, unless it would be unsafe to do so. Immediately after an accident or collision, the driver, if physically able, shall contact his or her supervisor who will arrange for the employee to take the appropriate test. The failure or refusal of an employee to submit to alcohol and/or drug testing under any of the circumstances listed above shall be treated as a refusal to test and will subject the employee to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.
    5. Complete a Vehicle Incident Form to be forwarded to the Vehicle Coordinator within 24 hours of the accident. Drivers will also forward copies of all police reports, immediately upon receipt to the Vehicle Coordinator.
    6. Assist the District in the vigorous legal defense or prosecution regarding the accident or collision.
  - c. **Personal Vehicle:** Employees driving personal vehicles engaged in District business who are involved in an accident or collision must do the following:
    1. Employees may use a personal vehicle for District business purposes in compliance with Vehicle/Equipment Policy and Employee Travel Policy.
    2. Tickets, violations, etc. incurred by District employees while using a personal vehicle for District business are the responsibility of the driver.
    3. In the case of a vehicle incident, District employees, while doing District business or on District time, must:
      - a. File a Police Report immediately;
      - b. Immediately inform your supervisor of the incident;
      - c. Complete the District Incident Damage Report Form;
      - d. Provide a copy of the Police Report to your supervisor.

4. Employees will be Drug and/or Alcohol tested if reasonable suspicion is determined in accordance with the Cook County Personnel Rules and/or the District Alcohol & Controlled Substances Use Policy.
5. Subject to any required approval of the District's Board of Commissioners, expenses related to vehicular incidents incurred by an employee driving his/her own vehicle for the purpose of conducting District business shall may in certain cases be covered by the District provided the operation of such vehicle is in compliance with the Vehicle Use/Equipment Policy, the Employee Travel Policy, the Incident Review Board Policy, the Cook County Personnel Rules, and all applicable federal, state, and local laws.
6. **Supervisors:** If an incident occurs with an employee using his/her own personal vehicle, for business purposes, supervisors:
  - a. May go to the scene of an employee incident if the supervisor deems it necessary;
  - b. Should ensure that the employee complies with this policy by obtaining the Police Report and the completed Incident damage Report;
  - c. Should submit the employees Police Report to the Chair of the IRB and the Fleet Maintenance Division or designee within one (1) business day of the Incident, or upon when available; and,
  - d. Submit the completed Incident Damage Report to the Chair of the IRB and the Fleet Maintenance Division within one (1) business day of the Incident.
7. **Discipline:** Employees that fail to comply with the provisions set in this policy may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

6) **Vehicle Coordinator Responsibilities:**

- a. A record of all driving violations for each employee utilizing a District vehicle shall be maintained by the Vehicle Coordinator including the date; time; employee name; vehicle identification number; incident report number; date reported to the VSC; and personnel actions taken by the District against the employee.
- b. Logs of all vehicle collisions shall be maintained by the Vehicle Coordinator who shall forward the report to the Incident Review Board.
- c. Maintain a file of all vehicle loss.
- d. Maintain individual driving records of employees authorized to drive a District vehicle.

7) **Miscellaneous:**

- a. Drivers of District vehicles, and/or personal vehicles being used for District business purposes, shall observe all traffic laws and regulations and shall observe safe driving practices. Drivers and passengers in District vehicles also shall wear seat belts at all times. In addition, drivers of District vehicles shall refrain from talking (unless via a hands free device), texting, or emailing via a cell phone or other electronic device while driving.. All drivers of a District vehicle involved in accidents and those who have been charged with a traffic violation, as a result of the accident, are required to attend a driving safety training class.

- b. Except for the purpose of law enforcement including, but not limited to, surveillance and radar gun use activities, the driver of a District vehicle must turn off the engine upon stopping at a destination and must not cause or allow an engine to idle at any location for more than five consecutive minutes or a period or periods aggregating more than five minutes in any one-hour period, except when idling is absolutely necessary for the conduct of District business, for personal safety, or to comply with traffic laws and law enforcement personnel.
- c. Use of tobacco products or smoking is prohibited in District vehicles.
- d. The District shall not be liable for injuries or damages arising from activities outside the scope of employment, including, but not limited to, personal use of rented vehicles by employees during a District authorized business trip. Any damages arising from these circumstances are the responsibility of the employee. To the extent that the District incurs financial liability for the acts of employees which occur outside the scope of employment, the District reserves the right to seek reimbursement from the responsible person.
- e. At no time will District funds be used directly or indirectly to pay or reimburse an employee for traffic or parking violations.
- f. Employees are held personally responsible for all parking and/or traffic violations incurred while operating District vehicles.
- g. Any employee performing work which requires the operation of a District-owned vehicle, or private vehicle at District expense, shall notify his/her immediate supervisor immediately of any current restrictions or changes in driving privileges, including, but not limited to, revocation, suspension, cancellation, denial, Restricted Driving Permit, Judicial Driving Permit, Probationary License, Family Financial Responsibility Driving Permit, leaving the scene of an accident, refusal or neglect to report a traffic accident and traffic violations. Any restrictions or changes to driving privileges shall be reported by the employee to the employee's supervisor immediately and a record maintained in the department. Any employee who fails to report restrictions or changes to their driving privileges, and/or continues to operate a vehicle in the performance of District duties, is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination from District employment. The District reserves the right to do periodic checks of employee driver's licenses.
- h. Those employees authorized for overnight use of District Vehicles shall, when away from work for an extended period of time, for vacation, sick leave, compensatory time off, 8 travel, etc., return the assigned District Vehicle to the custody of his/her Department Head during the period of absence.
- i. Nothing in this ordinance is intended or shall be construed to extend or enlarge the obligations, liability, or responsibilities that the District currently has to employees, or third parties, by law or contract, if any, in regards to the operation of motor vehicles.

#### 8) **Technological Device Removal Restriction Policy:**

- a. **General Statement:** The District recognizes that technological devices can promote opportunities for greater efficiency, accountability, and employee safety. With this in mind, once issued or installed, it is imperative that such technological tools and devices be used appropriately. Any action to remove, alter, bypass, disconnect or otherwise interfere with the operation of any technology tools or devised installed in any District vehicle without the express prior written approval of a District Department Head may be grounds for discipline up to and including termination.

**b. Procedures:**

1. District vehicles can be equipped with, and employees may be issued, a technological device.
2. Any malfunction of a technological devices unit will be investigated. If an employee is found to have caused the malfunction by tampering, vandalism or other misconduct; the employee may be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

**9) Parade Float Policy:**

- a. **General Statement:** The District will participate in events that provide opportunities to showcase the District to new or diverse audiences. This policy is intended to clarify the requirements for the use of a District parade float, or other parade vehicle, in a parade or other public gatherings.

**b. Procedures:****1. External Use Restrictions:**

- District parade floats are to be used only for District purposes;
- District parade floats are not to be utilized by non-District employees, unless approved by the General Superintendent; and,
- District parade requests will be reviewed on a first come first serve basis.

**2. Participant Requirements:**

- All participants riding on a District float must sign a Waiver of Liability form (*Appendix A*);
- All participants riding on open floats shall have solid sitting arrangement with hand holds readily available to them;
- No person shall be wired or tied to the float;
- Secured safety rails, barriers, or ropes may use to prevent a fall from the float. No unsecured riders may be located where they might fall beneath the float, its wheels or between tow vehicle and float (*e.g. no seating on rear edge of tow vehicle or on front edge of float*);
- If present, children must be under adult supervision and seated at all times when in motion;
- Riders are to remain on float once the parade begins and at all time when the float is in motion. Alcohol consumption or smoking on the float is prohibited;
- No throwing or distribution of candy and/or promotional items from parade float/vehicles; and,
- If candy and/or promotional items are to be distributed to patrons or participants, they must be distributed by parade participants walking alongside the float/vehicle.

3. **Music: (a)** The music must maintain a volume that will not interfere with other participants in the parade and must not contain vulgar or inappropriate language that could tarnish the reputation of the District.

**10) Parking Placard Policy:**

- a. **General Statement:** The District has developed parking and traffic regulations on its property to help maintain District safety. The District requires that all vehicles operated on District property observe all District parking and traffic regulations and all applicable provisions of state law and the District Code. This policy is specific to District parking placards that may be used after normal business hours, overnight, and/or at restricted or undesignated locations, in order to avoid a District Law Enforcement vehicle parking citation.

**b. Procedures:**

1. **Standard Guest Parking Placard Template:** District issued parking placards for guests should include, at a minimum, the following information:
  - the User Department name that authorized the parking placard;
  - a staff contact person's name, phone and/or email;
  - the date(s) and/or time(s) in which the permit shall be valid;
  - the location of where the parking placard is valid;
  - a brief description of the event/project taking place (*i.e. Construction Activity; Volunteer Restoration Activity; Pavilion Permit Activity; Campground Permit Holder; District Work Assignment Activity; Research Activity; etc.*);
  - the name of the individual to whom the parking placard was issued (*e.g. name of the driver*); and,
  - a parking placard number for each placard distributed.

Special Note: The back of every parking placard shall be the "Rules & Regulations" referenced below. User Departments should update the Intranet parking placard master list when distributing guest parking placards.

2. **Employee Parking Placards:** District employees that use District issued vehicles (i.e. take home vehicles and/or pool cars), or personal vehicles for District related business, should use a District issued employee parking placard when necessary. The back of every parking placard shall be the "Rules & Regulations" referenced below. Departments should update the Intranet employee parking placard master list when distributing employee parking placards. In lieu of a District employee parking placard, employees may use their District issued business card when necessary.
3. **Parking Placard Requests:** All internal or external requests for parking placards should be directed to the appropriate Department Head, and/or their designee(s).
4. **STANDARD PARKING PLACARD RULES & REGULATIONS:**
  - a. Parking placards are non-transferable and does not guarantee a parking space.
  - b. Any vehicle without a parking placard found to be parked in violation of any parking ordinance, or in a portion of District parking facility marked as parking for "authorized vehicles only", is subject to ticketing, where applicable (i.e. parking after hours, parking overnight, and parking in undesignated locations, etc.).
  - c. All parking placards must be properly and visibly displayed on the dashboard, passenger side, of the vehicle it is issued to in accordance with the instructions provided when the parking placard are issued.
  - d. The responsibility for the proper display of parking placards lie with the holder of that placard. Failure to properly display any parking placard will subject the holder to a citation.
  - e. Parking is allowed only within marked spaces. Every legal space within the District parking system is clearly marked. Any vehicle occupying more than one space, or extended beyond the marked space, is in violation of parking regulations and subject to a citation.
  - f. The District is not responsible or liable for any damage to and/or theft of any vehicle, its equipment or contents while the vehicle is parked on District-owned property.



- g. Counterfeiting, altering or the possession and/or use of a lost, stolen, voided, counterfeited or altered parking placard will subject the individual to a citation and/or disciplinary action.
- h. Driving and/or parking vehicles on grass/athletic fields are strictly prohibited, except for prior approved business necessity purposes.
- i. Illegally parked vehicles may be towed at the owner's expense.

### **RESPONSIBILITY:**

**Department Heads:** District Department Heads are required to: (1) Assign department designated Vehicle Coordinator(s); (2) through their designated Vehicle Coordinator will be responsible for administering the vehicle equipment policies and procedures; (3) designate the individual employee or specific program function requiring each District vehicle and piece of equipment for District business; (4) work with the Facilities & Fleet Department and notify the General Superintendent or his designee before approving the removal of any Technological Device from District equipment and/or vehicle; (5) communicating this policy to employees under their direction; (6) distributing, and/or managing District issues Parking Placards as described in this policy; (7) designate a staff person(s) to track the distribution of all parking placards; (8) informing the Law Enforcement Department of any special situation in which an individual parking placard date and/or time restriction will be amended and/or adjusted; and, (9) work to ensure that parking placards, under their jurisdiction, are distributed to the appropriate individual(s) during times in which District Law Enforcement are authorized to issue parking citations.

**Supervisors:** Supervisors are required to: (1) comply with this policy; and, (2) maintain a current list of assigned and pool District vehicles and equipment which will be reported to the Vehicle Coordinator annually.

**Vehicle Coordinators:** Vehicle Coordinators are required to: (1) comply with this policy; (2) review inventory lists of assigned and pool District vehicles and equipment quarterly; and (3) be responsible for administering the vehicle equipment policies and procedures

**District Employees:** All District employees are required to comply with this policy. District employees who are issued a citation for violation of any parking ordinance shall be personally responsible for proper payment of any fine or other fee.

**Law Enforcement Department:** shall be responsible for enforcing applicable laws, the District code, and the parking placard policy provisions as it related to motor vehicles and traffic.

**Communications Department:** The Communications Department shall be responsible for creating and distributing the standard parking placard template user departments are to use when distributing parking placards.

**Department of Facilities & Fleet Maintenance Department:** The Department of Facilities & Fleet Maintenance Department (*Fleet Maintenance*) will: (1) review all requests to remove technological devices from District vehicles; (2) upon consultation with the General Superintendent or his designee, approve or reject such requests; (3) maintain all parade floats and related vehicles; (4) assist in recruiting and assigning parade float drive/s; and, (5) assist in the management and usage of all parade floats.

**Conservation & Experiential Programming Department:** The Conservation & Experiential Programming Department shall: (1) register parades for the District, and sends employee notices, with the assistance of the Department of Conservation & Experiential Programming and the Facilities & Fleet Department; (2) review and when appropriate approve other parade float requests; (3) ensure that parade float participants sign off on waiver of liability document (see *Appendix A*); (4) stores all waivers of liability related documents; and, (5) coordinate parade float appearances with the General Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, or other District employees.

**TRAINING REQUIREMENTS:**

- 1) All District employees should be trained on this policy.

**COMMUNICATION PLAN:**

- 1) This policy should be distributed to all staff.
- 2) This policy should be added to the District shared drive, intranet, and website.
- 3) A copy of this policy should be placed in all District vehicles.
- 4) Dept. Heads should work to ensure that their staff is knowledgeable about this policy.

**REFERENCES:****Forest Preserve District of Cook County**

Title 1: District Vehicle Policy (FPDCC Code Section 1- 14: 1-4)

**Forest Preserve District of Cook County**

Title 4: Motor Vehicles and Traffic (FPDCC Code Section 4-2: 1-15)

**Forest Preserve District of Cook County**

Employee Handbook: Rules of Conduct Section

**POLICY LEAD:**

Anthony D. Tindall  
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**APPROVAL:**

Arnold Randall  
General Superintendent

**POLICY HISTORY:**

Approved: 07/08/2016

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Revised: 06/13/2018

If you have questions, comments, or suggestions concerning District policies, please contact:

**Forest Preserve District of Cook County**  
Office of the General Superintendent  
69 W. Washington St., Suite 2040, Chicago, IL 60602  
Email: FPD.Policy@cookcountyil.gov



## Appendix A: Waiver of Liability- Parade Float

I, \_\_\_\_\_, and/or the minor to whom I am a parent or guardian, \_\_\_\_\_, desire to ride a parade float sponsored by the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, Illinois as part of the \_\_\_\_\_ parade scheduled for \_\_\_\_\_ (the "Parade").

I understand and expressly acknowledge that the activities of the Parade (including pre- and post-Parade activities and being on a Parade float) are dangerous and involve the risk of serious injury, death and/or property damage. I assume all risks associated with participating in the activities of the Parade. I hereby release and hold harmless the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, Illinois, its officers, commissioners, agents and employees, from any liability associated with the Parade. I hereby promise not to sue the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, Illinois for any matter related in any way to the Parade.

If I am a parent or guardian of any minor participant in the Parade, I understand and expressly acknowledge that the activities of the Parade (including pre- and post-Parade activities and being on a Parade float) are dangerous and involve the risk of serious injury, death and/or property damage. I assume all risks, on behalf of the minor to whom I am a parent or guardian, associated with participating in the activities of the Parade.

I hereby release and hold harmless the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, Illinois, its officers, commissioners, agents and employees, from any liability associated with such minor's participation in the Parade. I hereby promise not to sue the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, Illinois for any matter related in any way to the Parade.

If I am an employee of the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, Illinois, I understand that my participation in the Parade is not required, completely voluntary, and separate from my employment with the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, Illinois.

I have read this Waiver of Liability and agree to abide by all terms as stated herein. I hereby agree that this waiver shall be binding upon and enforceable against me, my personal representatives, spouse, domestic partner, successors, assigns executors, heirs, and next of kin without limitation. If I am a parent or guardian of any minor participant in the Parade, I hereby agree that this waiver shall be binding upon such minor's heirs, executors, successors, assigns and next of kin.

**I HAVE READ AND VOLUNTARILY SIGN THE WAIVER OF LIABILITY AGREEMENT:**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

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