

CITY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT INSTRUCTION	NUMBER DI – 7.24	DEPARTMENT PARK & RECREATION
SUBJECT PARK RANGER POLICY	PAGE 1 OF 7	EFFECTIVE DATE JANUARY 1, 2009
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7.24.1 BACKGROUND

The Park and Recreation Department established the Park Ranger Program in 1989. The Park Ranger Program was established to conduct interpretive and resource management activities as their primary function, and to conduct limited enforcement functions as a peripheral activity.

7.24.2 MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Park Ranger Program is to help manage cultural and natural resources, provide the public with a safe recreational environment, and promote community stewardship.

7.24.3 PURPOSE

To establish Department policies and procedures for the Park Ranger Program in the following areas:

- A. Interpretation and Resource Protection
- B. Communications
- C. Enforcement
- D. Equipment
- E. Uniforms
- F. Training
- G. OC (Pepper) Spray

7.24.4 AUTHORITY

Municipal Code Section 63.0108 (Rev. 12/94)

Policy of the Park and Recreation Director

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7.24.5 DEFINITIONS

- A. **Park Rangers:** In this Department Instruction, the term “Park Rangers” includes both Senior Park Ranger and Park Ranger job classifications unless otherwise specified. In general, Park Ranger duties are to assist the public in the use of parks and park facilities; to develop and conduct interpretive programs; to patrol parks to enforce park rules and regulations; and to perform related work.
- B. **Resource Protection:** Park Rangers provide protection of natural and cultural park land resources through resource management procedures, presentation of interpretive and educational programs, and enforcement of state and municipal codes relating to resource protection.
- C. **Methods of Enforcement:** Based on the violation witnessed, Park Rangers will select the most appropriate method of enforcement. Enforcement Actions may include one or more of the following (listed in order of lowest to highest): Public Service Contact, Issuance of Verbal Warning and/or Field Interview, Issuance of Parking Violation, Issuance of Notice to Appear. If there is a possibility that the safety of a Ranger or the public is at risk by making a contact, there may be situations when no contact is made for safety reasons. Enforcement definitions are as follows:
- 1) “Consensual Encounter”: When a reasonable person would feel he or she is free to leave; if they stay, they stay voluntarily.
 - 2) “Cite and Release”: As long as the encounter is consensual, Rangers may issue citations for offenses committed in their presence, and the offense is one in which the Ranger has the authority to enforce.
 - 3) “Detention”: Physical detention of a suspect, i.e. when a reasonable person believes he or she is not free to leave. Park Rangers are not authorized to physically detain a suspect. If a suspect attempts to flee from the scene, Park Rangers cannot physically prevent them from leaving. However, a Ranger can inform a suspect that they are under arrest and that additional charges can and may be filed if the suspect attempts to flee per CA Penal Code section 148.”

7.24.6 PROCEDURES

- A. **Interpretation and Resource Protection**
- 1) Park Rangers use active and passive interpretation to promote community education and stewardship of natural resources and cultural features of park lands.

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- 2) Active interpretation consists of researching, planning and presenting educational information regarding natural resources and historic features of park lands for walks and lecture programs.
- 3) Passive interpretation consists of researching, planning and creating educational information regarding natural resources and historic features of park lands for brochures, displays, and unscheduled public contacts.
- 4) Park Rangers promote resource protection through interpretation, habitat management, project management and community stewardship, and in cooperation with other agencies.

B. Communications

1) Equipment Use

- a. Carry a radio and a cell phone at all times when on duty. Cell phones and radios must be activated while on the job.
- b. Use radios for communicating with other Park Rangers, staff, volunteers, and other agencies.
- c. Communicate by using the Park Ranger assigned call sign which is the Park Ranger badge number preceded by “Ranger” (e.g., “Ranger 3”).

2) Maintaining Communication

- a. It is the responsibility of Park Rangers to turn on radio and monitor all radio traffic while on the job.
- b. There are five radio talk groups assigned for Park Ranger communications. Park Rangers must monitor assigned talk group.
- c. Park Rangers also monitor Police dispatch in assigned area.
- d. When attending meetings/trainings, Park Rangers must follow the Policy on Communications and have a contingency plan for coverage. (e.g., “Ranger 3” code 10 – 7 out of service)
- e. Park Rangers must report all urgent public situations, injuries requiring emergency medical attention, accidents, and fires to Police Dispatch.
- f. Use Incident Report form and or other documentation methods as directed.

3) Sign In/Sign Out

- a. Park Rangers will use the current standard 10 code’s PD496
- b. At the beginning of each shift, Park Rangers will go “10 – 8” (in service) on assigned talk group and area Police dispatch.

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- c. Anytime a Park Ranger will not be monitoring the radio, she or he will go “10 – 7” (out of service) on assigned talk group and assigned area Police dispatch.
- d. At the end of the shift, Park Rangers will go “10 – 42” (off duty) on assigned talk group and area Police dispatch.

C. Enforcement

- 1) Policy: The issuance of citations for misdemeanor violations is to be a peripheral duty for Park Rangers and is not the focus of Park Ranger duties. The Police Department has primary law enforcement responsibility in parks, beach and open space areas. Park Rangers are “Public Officers”, not “Peace Officers.” Park Rangers are not required by state law to attend POST (Peace Officer Standards and Training) classes.

It is also the policy of the Park and Recreation Department to ensure procedures are in place to provide consistent strategies for the Park Ranger interactions with park patrons. Primary considerations in every contact are the personal safety of the Park Ranger, followed by public safety, and finally, resource protection. Park Rangers should also refer to Department Instruction 3.20, “Threats from Outside Sources” for guidance regarding contacts and interactions with park patrons.

- a. Park Rangers will use the lowest and/or most appropriate level of enforcement to gain voluntary compliance, ensure personal and public safety, provide public education, prevent accidents and de-escalate incidents. Park Rangers will receive specific training on levels of enforcement and techniques on contact management.
- b. Park Rangers are not authorized to initiate physical contact, including the discharge of OC (Pepper) spray, unless personal safety is in jeopardy.
- c. Park Rangers shall utilize physical force or defensive tactics solely for defensive purposes against an immediate and direct physical assault on the Ranger.
- d. Park Rangers should never attempt to detain or pursue an uncooperative or fleeing subject who refuses to remain present while awaiting the arrival of a summoned peace officer. Park Rangers are not authorized to make custodial (physical) arrests. Park Rangers are only authorized to conduct consensual encounters. See the definitions section of this policy for additional information. Park Rangers will also receive specific training on definitions of “consensual encounter”, “detention”, and “arrest” as well as Fourth Amendment protections for citizens.

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- e. Park Rangers are authorized to enforce misdemeanor violations of state and local codes, pursuant to SDMC section 63.0108 and California Penal Code sections 836.5 and 853.6, while on the job and when violations occur in City of San Diego beach or park areas. SDMC codes may only be enforced within the corporate boundary of the City of San Diego.
- f. Park Rangers shall carry authorized citation forms while on the job.
- g. Park Rangers may observe subjects from a safe distance only for the purpose of directing Police Officers to the subject's location. During this observation, Park Rangers must observe all applicable vehicle codes and department instructions regarding vehicle operations. (See section D.1.)
- h. Park Rangers give up their right to make a "citizens' arrest" while on the job.

2) Options in Methods of Enforcement:

- a. Public Service Contact: Education through interpretation by verbally explaining the rules or regulations to gain voluntary compliance.
- b. Verbal Warning and/or Field Interview Report (Form ARJIS-1) - Standard Park Ranger Interview Report
- c. Issuance of Parking Violation Notice (Form TR-1505)
- d. Issuance of Notice to Appear (Form PD-177-B) – Standard Park Ranger Notice to Appear
- e. Park Rangers are only authorized to conduct consensual encounters. All incidents including the use of physical force must be documented with an incident report and forwarded up the chain of command for review.

D. Equipment

1) Vehicle Policy

- a. Use of Park Ranger vehicles for pursuit is not allowed under any circumstances.
- b. Red emergency lights will be used only in emergency situations, or when directed by other law enforcement agencies.
- c. Park Rangers must follow the Department Instruction 6.14 "Driving on Turf".
- d. Park Rangers must follow the standards listed in the City's Vehicle Operator Manual.

2) Park Rangers will be provided with and trained to use the following required equipment:

- a. Radio(s) with Police Department and Fire and Life Safety Department capabilities.
- b. City issued cell phone.

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- c. Properly marked patrol/work vehicles.
- d. AED Unit (Required if a unit has been assigned.)
- e. Park Rangers may not carry or use firearms of any kind while on the job.

E. Uniforms

- 1) Park Rangers will be issued and wear uniforms consistent with the MEA Memorandum of Understanding, Department policy and Division Deputy Director discretion. Inspections for professional appearance may occur anytime.
- 2) Probationary employees are responsible for obtaining one uniform set within two weeks of employment.
- 3) Park Rangers will follow Park and Recreation Department Park Ranger Grooming Standards as adopted by the Department Director.

F. Training

- 1) The Park and Recreation Department Safety and Training Manager will ensure that Park Rangers are trained in policies and procedures in the following areas: interpretation and resource protection, communications, law enforcement, equipment operation, and emergency assistance.
- 2) Training will include on-the-job training, Citywide and Department training, and training offered by outside sources.
- 3) Senior Park Rangers, District Managers with Park Ranger Programs, and the Department Safety and Training Manager, will review training requirements as needed, and ensure that trainings are updated and provided on a consistent and on ongoing basis.
- 4) The Safety and Training Manager will ensure staff meet minimum training requirements and will maintain staff training records. Employees may request copies of training records at any time.

G. Oleoresin Capsicum (Pepper) Spray (OC) Policy

- 1) OC may only be carried by uniformed Park Rangers who are authorized to carry chemical agents in the performance of their duties. Carrying OC is the personal choice of the Park Ranger and is not required by the Park and Recreation Department.
- 2) OC may only be used in situations where the Park Ranger's presence and verbal commands to deter the suspect's attempt to injure the Ranger are not effective. OC should ONLY be used where the Ranger's personal safety is in jeopardy.
- 3) OC should only be used as a means to reduce, limit or prevent injuries and is solely for defensive purposes against an immediate and direct physical assault to the Ranger.

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- 4) Park Rangers shall notify Police Department Dispatch immediately after OC has been deployed as well as notifying their immediate supervisor.
- 5) It is the Park Ranger's responsibility to call for and when possible ensure proper first aid is administered whenever OC is used.
 - a. In all cases when OC is used, Park Rangers shall complete a detailed and accurate report concerning the circumstances relating to its use.
 - b. Park Rangers are responsible for the OC issued to them and are not permitted to loan or give this restricted equipment to other persons.
- 6) OC Training
 - a. Park Rangers who choose to carry OC are first required to complete a chemical agents training from a P.O.S.T. certified instructor or academy.

RESOURCES

San Diego Municipal Code 63.0108 (Rev. 12-94) - Park Rangers Authorized to Enforce State and Local Codes

Threat Policy, City of San Diego Administrative Regulation 97.10

Threats from Outside Sources, Park and Recreation Department Instruction 3.20

Driving on Turf, Park and Recreation Department Instruction 6.14

Authorized by:  Date: 1-1-09