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## Financial Assistance/Scholarship Program Guidelines

### Purpose of the Financial Assistance/Scholarship Program

Wildwood District provides financial assistance/scholarships to residents who are interested in enrolling in a Park District program, but unable to do so due to financial hardships. Based on availability of funds, the Park District will attempt to provide financial assistance to those who qualify based on the eligibility requirements. Financial assistance will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis based on need as well as availability of funds. Wildwood Park District reserves the right to approve full or partial assistance or deny an applicant's request.

### Qualifications and Limitations for Financial Assistance

1. Financial Assistance is available to Wildwood Park District residents only. Wildwood Residents fall within the taxing boundary of the Park District.
2. Financial assistance is available for certain general recreation programs (these programs include summer camps, swim lessons, Schoolhouse Adventures Preschool). Programs provided by an outside contractor, Special Events, and co-operative programming are not eligible for scholarships. Contractual programs are listed as "Contracted by....." in the brochure and on the web. Some additional exclusions may apply.
3. Financial assistance is limited to one program per person per season. Applications must be completed each fiscal year. Approval for one program does not ensure continued approval for succeeding programs or seasons. *The following count as one season or one individual program: nine weeks of summer camp, Schoolhouse Adventures Preschool programs.*
4. Placement in requested camps is based on camp availability. Registrations may be processed prior to scholarship approval with a \$50 deposit per person, per camp to ensure a spot in the camp. This \$50 deposit will be used towards your final contribution amount. Registration and deposit does not guarantee scholarship approval.
5. The maximum an individual may receive in scholarship awards is **\$500 annually**. The fiscal year runs **May 1, 2026 – April 30, 2027**.
6. The participant's payment, which will be outlined in the award letter, is due before registration can be processed.
7. Delinquency on participant's portion of the payment will result in ineligibility for future program participation and/or financial assistance.
8. All registration policies and procedures apply to financial assistance/scholarship applicants.
9. The Executive Director evaluates each application submitted and makes the decision whether or not to grant the request.
10. If requested, the applicant must provide references.

### Eligibility Guidelines

The following household size and pre-tax income criteria will be used to determine initial eligibility for financial assistance. Other factors such as current participation in public aid, food stamp program, subsidized housing, excessive medical bills etc. may also be considered in determining eligibility. To qualify, annual household income must be less than the values below. The chart is updated annually and may change year to year based on the chart provided by US Department of Health and Human Services Poverty Guidelines. <https://aspe.hhs.gov/topics/poverty-economic-mobility/poverty-guidelines>

**2026 POVERTY GUIDELINES FOR THE 48 CONTIGUOUS STATES AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA:** <https://aspe.hhs.gov/topics/poverty-economic-mobility/poverty-guidelines>

Persons in family/household	Poverty guideline
1	\$15,960
2	\$21,640
3	\$27,320
4	\$33,000
5	\$38,680
6	\$44,360
7	\$50,040
8	\$55,720

For families/households with more than 8 persons, add \$5,680 for each additional person.

**The following is the definition of income:** Income is defined as any monies earned before any deductions such as income taxes, social security taxes, insurance premiums, charitable contributions, and bonds. It includes the following: (1) monetary compensation for services including wages, salary, commissions, or fees; (2) net income from non-farm self-employment; (3) net income from farm self-employment; (4) social security; (5) dividends or interest on savings or bonds or income from estates or trusts; (6) net rental income; (7) public assistance or welfare payments; (8) unemployment compensation; (9) government civilian employee or military retirement or pensions or veteran payments; (10) private pensions or annuities; (11) alimony or child support payments; (12) regular contributions from persons not living in the household; (13) net royalties; and (14) other cash income. Other cash income would include cash amounts received or withdrawn from any source including savings, investments, trust accounts, and other resources which would be available to pay for registration.

## **Application Procedures**

Those who are seeking financial assistance must complete the Financial Assistance/Scholarship Program Application Form. Completed applications should be turned in at the Wildwood Park District Rule House, 33325 N. Sears Boulevard Wildwood, IL 60030 and directed to the Executive Director **at least two weeks prior to the start of the program or three weeks early if it is a camp, or Schoolhouse Adventures preschool program.** The applications will be individually reviewed, and the applicants will be notified of the decision within three weeks after receipt of the completed application at which point an email with a letter will be sent to the email address on the application with the determination and further instructions.

## **Required Documentation**

Applications cannot be considered without submission of all the documents listed on the application. Missing documentation will delay review of the application until all documents are received. Front Desk Staff may make copies, if needed. The Park District may require additional documents if deemed necessary.

## **Responsibilities of the Award Recipients**

A limited amount of award money is available, as such, attendance in the program/activities you are approved for is important. Scholarship awards can be revoked if participation is not regular.

If you have a medical or other reason you cannot participate in activity, it shall be the responsibility of the recipient (or their legal parent/guardian) to inform the park district of this conflict in participation. Failure to do so may result in the revocation of your award.

**PLEASE RETAIN THIS PAGE FOR YOUR RECORDS**