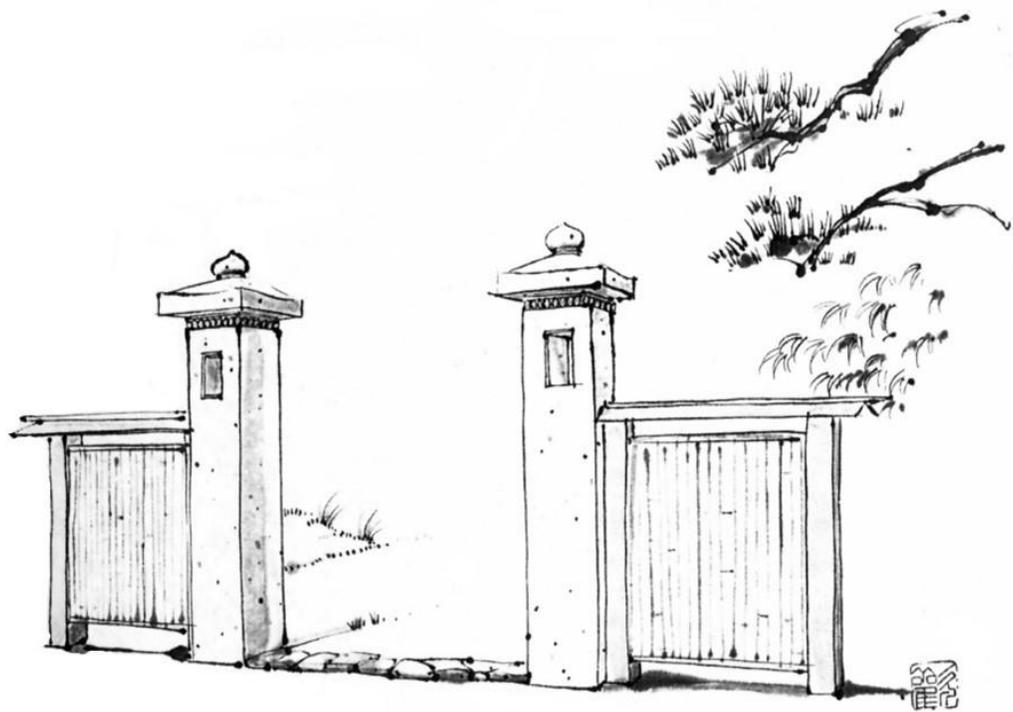




# Zilker Botanical Garden Intern Handbook

2022



Matthew C. Gaston  
Education Director  
[education@zbgconservancy.org](mailto:education@zbgconservancy.org)

# Welcome!

We are happy to have you here working with us! We endeavor to foster a positive work culture that encourages education and enjoyment of this unique environment. We look forward to helping preserve the Zilker Botanical Garden together.

## Who We Are

The Zilker Botanical Garden is located on 28 acres nestled within Zilker Metropolitan Park in the heart of downtown Austin. We offer themed gardens with thousands of native and cultivated plants.

The Zilker Botanical Garden is managed as a public-private partnership between the City of Austin Parks & Recreation Department (PARD) and the Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy (ZBGC). The ZBGC also has an agreement with the Austin Area Garden Council (AAGC), which brings the resources of its 30 garden clubs to this partnership. ZBGC manages garden admissions, gate operations, the website for the garden, education programming, and the Chrysalis Gift Shop. PARD is working with the ZBGC to help us expand and eventually handle all aspects of managing the gardens.

The garden is open to the public and is enjoyed by over 175,000 visitors each year, including locals, tourists, and thousands of school children from Austin and the surrounding communities.

## Our Mission

To guide, enhance and grow a world-class botanical garden in the heart of Austin whose beauty and diversity will serve to inspire and educate all those who enter its gates and walk its verdant paths.

## About the ZBG Internship Program

The Garden Club of Austin (TGCOA) is funding a paid summer internship in partnership with the Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy. The starting and finishing dates of the ten-week internship are flexible. The internship will focus primarily on horticulture and grounds maintenance at the Zilker Botanical Garden, although the intern may also be involved with some program and event preparation to create a well-rounded public garden experience.

Undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in horticulture-related fields of study are encouraged to apply. Selection will be based on the applicant's demonstrated interest in horticulture and on academic performance. Residence in Central Texas will be considered only when qualifications are otherwise nearly equal.

The ZBG Internship Committee must receive completed applications, including letters of recommendations, no later than March 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. Applications received after this date will not be considered. Application forms may be obtained from the applicant's school, scholarship and/or career offices or by email [education@zbgconservancy.org](mailto:education@zbgconservancy.org).

The Zilker Botanical Garden Education Director is responsible for organizing and coordinating the internship program and will work in conjunction with the City Manager and Garden Center Coordinator. Most of the internship projects and work will be with PARD, while smaller horticulture related projects with ZBGC.

## Course Credit

Many university-level horticultural programs require internships for their students to graduate and will offer course credit. It is the intern's responsibility to advise the Education Director on internship requirements including the reporting schedule. The intern should also contact their academic unit and provide them with the ZBGC Education Director's contact information ([education@zbgconservancy.org](mailto:education@zbgconservancy.org)).

## Internship Project

The internship is an educational experience the classroom knowledge is applied in a botanical garden. This includes learning both what one enjoys and what one might not find unappealing. Because of the diversity of activities that occur in the garden, we want interns to spend the first 4 weeks rotating between PARD staff and ZBGC staff. By the beginning of week five, the intern in conjunction with staff will identify a project can complete by the end of their term. The internship project will culminate in a presentation in the Garden Center Auditorium in the last week of the internship (date determined based on availability).

## Internship Schedule

The intern schedule is flexible to accommodate the intern's project and summer schedule but is expected to work 40hrs/week. Below are some key events in the internship:

- Week 1- Orientation Week
- Weeks 2-4- Rotations with Staff
- Week 5- Determine Project
- Last Week- Project is completed; Project is presented.

The first week of the internship is orientation week with Education Director and City. The internship project is to be determined by the beginning of the fifth week and is to be completed by the end of the internship. If the schedule permits between Week 5 and the end of the internship, we will take a field trip to the San Antonio Botanical Garden.

## Employment basics

### Employment contract types

Full-time employees work at least 30 hours per week or 130 hours per month on average.

Part-time employees are those who work fewer than 30 hours per week.

Temporary employees are those who work either full-time or part-time, but only for a limited time- agreed upon during the hiring process.

Interns are temporary employees.

## Equal opportunity employment

Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy is an equal opportunity employer. We don't tolerate discrimination against protected characteristics (gender, age, sexual orientation, race, nationality, ethnicity, religion, disability, veteran status.) We want all employees to treat others with respect and professionalism. In practice, this means that we:

- Hire and promote people based on skills, experience, or potential and try to reduce bias in every process (e.g., through structured interviews.)
- Make accommodations to help people with disabilities move about safely on our premises and use our products, services, and equipment
- Use inclusive, diversity-sensitive language in all official documents, signs, and job ads.

## Attendance

We expect you to be present during your scheduled working hours. If you face an emergency that prevents you from coming to work one day, contact your manager as soon as possible. We may excuse unreported absences in cases of serious accidents or acute medical emergencies but, whenever possible, we should know when you won't be coming in. Any schedule changes should be submitted to your manager no later than 1 week before your scheduled shift.

## Policy brief & purpose

Our employee attendance policy outlines our expectations about our employees' coming to work. Being punctual when coming to work helps maintain efficiency in our workplace.

## Policy elements

Most employees need to collaborate with their colleagues to do their job. To make this collaboration easier, we expect you to be punctual and follow the schedule you and your manager have agreed on. If you are absent or late on occasion, you should have a good reason.

Being consistently tardy or absent can cause problems to your colleagues who may have to shoulder your work. This behavior may bring about a "bad attendance" record and you may need to go through progressive discipline.

## What is absenteeism, presenteeism, and tardiness?

*Absenteeism* refers to frequent absence from an employee's job responsibilities. This includes not coming to work frequently or taking excessive sick leave without being able to submit doctor's notes.

*Presenteeism* refers to being present at work beyond your schedule even when we don't require overtime. This can cause you to overwork and have an impact on your productivity and job satisfaction. We want to ensure that you keep your schedule both when coming to work and leaving.

*Tardiness* refers to coming in late, taking longer breaks than you're entitled to, and constantly leaving earlier from work without reason. We won't mind if you're a bit late one morning or leave a little earlier when approved. But, we want to make sure you generally follow your schedule and you don't cause disruption in our workplace.

You are responsible for monitoring your working hours through FareClock. Please be diligent in recording your hours to receive your due payment.

## Unforeseen absences

If you can't come to work one day, notify your manager as soon as possible. Unexcused or unreported absence for more than three days will be considered job abandonment. If you need to leave work early, inform your manager.

We will understand if you have good reasons for being absent, even if you don't report it. Those reasons usually involve serious accidents and family or acute medical emergencies. We may ask you to bring us doctor's notes or other verification. In these cases, we may record your absence as "excused."

The following list, although not exhaustive, includes reasons that we don't consider excused absence:

- Waking up late.
- Stopping on the way to work for personal reasons.

- Traffic or public transportation delays excluding situations that result in the closing of roads.
- Holidays that haven't been approved.

## Good attendance

You have a good attendance record when you:

- Report consistently to work.
- Come to work at the scheduled shift start time.
- Leave work at the scheduled shift end time
- Remaining at work during working hours (excluding breaks.)
- Take breaks that don't exceed an expected length.
- Notify your manager when you need to be absent or late.
- Be absent or late for good reasons only.

## Workplace policies: safety, health, and confidentiality

This section describes workplace policies that apply to everyone at our company: employees, contractors, volunteers, vendors, and stakeholders alike. These policies help us build a productive, lawful, and pleasant workplace.

### Confidentiality and data protection

We want to ensure that private information about clients, employees, partners, and our company is well-protected. Examples of confidential information are:

- Employee records
- Unpublished financial information
- Data of customers/partners/vendors
- Customer lists (existing and prospective)
- Unpublished goals, forecasts, and initiatives marked as confidential

As part of our hiring process, we are also committed to:

- Restrict and monitor access to sensitive data.
- Develop transparent data collection procedures.
- Build secure networks to protect online data from cyberattacks.
- Establish data protection practices (e.g., secure locks, data encryption, frequent backups, access authorization.)

We also expect you to act responsibly when handling confidential information.

### **You must:**

- Lock or secure confidential information always.
- Shred confidential documents when they're no longer needed.
- Make sure you view confidential information on secure devices only.
- Only disclose information to other employees when it's necessary and authorized.
- Keep confidential documents inside our company's premises unless it's necessary to move them.

### **You must not:**

- Use confidential information for your benefit or profit.
- Disclose confidential information to anyone outside of our company.
- Replicate confidential documents and files and store them on insecure devices.

This policy is important for our company's legality and reputation. We will terminate any employee who breaches our confidentiality guidelines for personal profit.

We may also discipline any unintentional breach of this policy depending on its frequency and seriousness. We will terminate employees who repeatedly disregard this policy, even when they do so unintentionally.

## Harassment and violence

To build a positive and productive workplace, everyone is expected to treat others well and help them feel safe. We commit to disciplining discriminatory, offensive, or inappropriate behavior. To do this properly, we ask you to report any discriminatory action against yourself or your colleagues to your supervisor. Our company will not retaliate against you if you file a complaint or discrimination lawsuit. Any employee who retaliates or discriminates will face disciplinary action.

### Workplace harassment

Harassment is a broad term and may include seemingly harmless actions, like gossip. Here are some examples of what we consider harassment:

- Sabotaging someone's work on purpose.
- Engaging in frequent or unwanted advances of any nature.
- Commenting derogatorily on a person's ethnic heritage or religious beliefs.
- Starting or spreading rumors about a person's personal life.
- Ridiculing someone in front of others or singling them out to perform tasks unrelated to their job (e.g., bringing coffee) against their will.

Sexual harassment is illegal, and we will seriously investigate reports. If an employee is found guilty of sexual harassment, they will be terminated.

If you're being harassed, whether by a colleague, customer, or vendor, you can choose to talk to any of these people:

- **Offenders.** If you suspect that an offender doesn't realize they are guilty of harassment, you could talk to them directly to resolve the harassment. This tactic is appropriate for cases of minor harassment (e.g., inappropriate jokes between colleagues.) Avoid using this approach with customers or stakeholders.
- **Your manager.** If customers or team members are involved in your claim, you may reach out to your manager. Your manager will assess your situation and take the appropriate next steps.

## Workplace violence

Violence in our workplace is a serious form of harassment. It includes physical and sexual assault, destruction of property, threats to harm a person or property, and verbal and psychological abuse. We want to avoid those incidents altogether, but we also want to be ready to respond if needed.

For this reason, we ask you to:

- Report to your manager if you suspect or know that someone is being violent. Your report will be confidential, and we will investigate the situation with discretion.
- Call a M.O.D. and emergency services if you witness incidents of severe physical violence (e.g., ones that involve a lethal weapon.) For your safety, avoid getting involved.

We will treat employees who verbally threaten others as high risk and they will receive an appropriate penalty. If we find that an employee commits an act of violence, we will terminate that employee and possibly press criminal charges. Employees who damage property deliberately will be solely responsible for paying for it.

Our workplace is founded on mutual respect, and we won't allow anyone to compromise this foundation.

## Workplace safety and health

Our company is committed to creating a hazard-free workplace. To this end, we will ensure workplace safety through preventive action and emergency management.

### Preventive action

Preventive actions are any actions we take to avoid injuries or illnesses related to the workplace. Management will periodically conduct risk assessments and job hazard analyses to uncover health risks to employees. And we will establish preventive measures to address risks accordingly.

We also expect you to take safety seriously. Always use protective equipment and follow standards whenever necessary. If you deliberately disregard our guidelines, we may terminate you for your own and others' safety.

## Emergency management

Emergency management refers to our plan to deal with sudden catastrophes like fire, floods, earthquakes, or explosions. Our emergency management provisions include:

- Technicians (external or internal) are available to repair leakages, damages, and blackouts.
- Fire extinguishers and other fire protection equipment that are easily accessible (see map\* for locations of extinguishers)
- An evacuation plan posted on each floor and online.
- Safety exits that are clearly indicated.

## Smoking

Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy is a smoke-free workplace. All areas in our garden & workplace (like restrooms, lobby, offices, staircases, warehouses) are strictly smoke-free to protect non-smokers.

## Drug-free workplace

Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy is a drug-free workplace. Whether you are an employee, contractor, or visitor, you must not bring, use, give away, or sell any drugs on company premises. If you are caught with illegal drugs or show that you are under the influence of substances, you will face disciplinary action up to and including termination.

## Alcohol

We prohibit employees from consuming alcohol during working hours, but they may consume alcoholic drinks in moderation at company events.

## Employee Code of Conduct

As an employee, you are responsible to behave appropriately at work. We outline our expectations here. We can't cover every single case of conduct, but we trust you to always use your best judgment. Reach out to your manager if you face any issues or have any questions.

## Work-Appropriate Communication

While working and interacting with others, please be aware of work-appropriate topics. Audibly consuming media relating to or conversing about sensitive topics may make others uncomfortable and we want everyone to be comfortable at work. Such topics may include politics, social issues, religion, a person's physical appearance, or other such things. We want everyone to feel that work is a safe and comfortable place to be and ask that everyone remain aware of considerate communication.

## Dress code

Our company's official dress code is the following:

Gift shop and ticketing booth staff should wear solid color pants or shorts. Shorts must be no shorter than mid-thigh length. Wear a solid color shirt of your choosing, a Zilker branded apron, and a name tag. We also offer a Zilker-branded shirt to wear for work at no charge. Close-toed shoes are required, preferably non-slip. Please prepare to be dressed appropriately for the weather (i.e., gloves, warm socks and hats for cold, sunscreen, and hats for heat).

Administrative staff should wear business casual attire. Close-toes shoed are recommended.

We also respect and permit grooming styles, clothing, and accessories that are dictated by religious beliefs, ethnicity, or disability.

## Cyber security and digital devices

This section deals with all things digital at work. We want to set some guidelines for using computers, phones, our internet connection, and social media to ensure security and protect our assets.

## Internet usage

Our organizations' internet connection is primarily for business. But you can occasionally use our connection for personal purposes if they don't interfere with your job responsibilities.

Also, we expect you to temporarily halt personal activities that slow down our internet connection (e.g., uploading photos) if you're asked to.

You must not use our internet connection to:

- Download or upload obscene, offensive, or illegal material.
- Send confidential information to unauthorized recipients.
- Invade another person's privacy and gain access to sensitive information.
- Download or upload pirated movies, music, material, or software.
- Visit potentially dangerous websites that can compromise our network and computers' safety.
- Perform unauthorized or illegal actions, like hacking, fraud, or buying/selling illegal goods.

## Cell phone

We allow the use of cell phones at work. We also want to ensure that your devices won't distract you from your work or disrupt our workplace. We ask you to follow a few simple rules:

- Use your cell phone in a manner that benefits your work (business calls, productivity apps, calendars)
- Avoid playing games on your phone or texting excessively.
- Don't use your phone for any reason while driving a company vehicle.
- Don't use your phone to record confidential information.

## Corporate email

Email is essential to our work. You should use your company email primarily for work, but we allow some uses of your company email for personal reasons.

- **Work-related use.** You can use your corporate email for work-related purposes without limitations. For example, you can sign up for newsletters and online services that will help you in your job or professional growth.
- **Personal use.** You can use your email for personal reasons if you keep it safe and avoid spamming and disclosing confidential information. For example, you can send emails to friends and family and download eBooks, guides, and other safe content for your personal use.

## Our general expectations

No matter how you use your corporate email, we expect you to avoid:

- Signing up for illegal, unreliable, disreputable, or suspect websites and services.
- Sending unauthorized marketing content or emails.
- Sending insulting or discriminatory messages and content.
- Spamming other people's emails, including your coworkers.

In general, use strong passwords and be vigilant in catching emails that carry malware or phishing attempts. If you are not sure that an email you received is safe, ask your manager.

## Social media

We want to provide practical advice to prevent the careless use of social media in our workplace. We address two types of social media uses: using personal social media at work and representing our company through social media.

### Using personal social media at work

You are permitted to access your personal accounts at work. We expect you to act responsibly, according to our policies, and ensure that you stay productive. Specifically, we ask you to:

- Discipline yourself. Avoid getting sidetracked by your social platforms.
- Ensure others know that your personal account or statements don't represent our company. For example, use a disclaimer such as "opinions are my own."
- Avoid sharing intellectual property (e.g., trademarks) or confidential information. Ask your manager or PR first before you share company news that's not officially announced.
- Avoid any defamatory, offensive, or derogatory content. You may violate our company's anti-harassment policy if you direct such content towards colleagues, clients, or partners.

### Representing our company through social media

If you handle our social media accounts or speak on our company's behalf, we expect you to protect our company's image and reputation. Specifically, you should:

- Be respectful, polite, and patient.
- Avoid speaking on matters outside your field of expertise when possible.
- Follow our confidentiality and data protection policies and observe laws governing copyrights, trademarks, plagiarism, and fair use.
- Coordinate with our PR department when you're about to share any major-impact content.
- Avoid deleting or ignoring comments for no reason.

- Correct or remove any misleading or false content as quickly as possible.

## Employee relationships

We want to ensure that relationships between employees are appropriate and harmonious. We outline our guidelines, and we ask you to always behave professionally.

### Fraternization

Fraternization refers to dating or being friends with your colleagues. In this policy, "dating" equals consensual romantic relationships and sexual relations.

### Dating colleagues

If you start dating a colleague, we expect you to maintain professionalism and keep excessive personal discussions outside of our workplace.

You are also obliged to respect your colleagues who date each other. We won't tolerate sexual jokes, malicious gossip, and improper comments. If you witness this kind of behavior, please report it to your manager.

### Dating managers

To avoid accusations of favoritism, abuse of authority, and sexual harassment, supervisors must not date their direct reports. This restriction extends to every manager above an employee.

Also, if you act as a hiring manager, you aren't allowed to hire your partner to your team. You can refer them for employment to other teams or departments where you don't have any managerial or hiring authority.

### Friendships at work

Employees who work together may naturally form friendships either in or outside of the workplace. We encourage this relationship between peers, as it can help you communicate and collaborate. We also expect you to focus on your work and keep personal disputes outside of our workplace.

### Workplace visitors

If you want to invite a visitor to our grounds, please ask for permission from your manager first. Also, inform our gate of your visitor's arrival.

When you have visitors, you also have responsibilities. You should:

- Always tend to your visitors (especially when they are underage.)
- Keep your visitors away from areas where there are dangerous machines, chemicals, confidential records, or sensitive equipment.
- Prevent your visitors from proselytizing your colleagues, gathering donations, or requesting participation in activities while on our premises.

Anyone who delivers orders, mail, or packages for employees should do so at the Gift Shop. If you are expecting a delivery, the Gift Shop will notify you so you may collect it.

## Payroll

We pay your salary or wage bi-weekly by direct deposit. You should be diligent in clocking in and out so we can accurately calculate your pay. Notify management of any time corrections by end of shift on Friday. Interns are compensated \$15/hr.

## Benefits and perks

In this section, we describe what we offer to our employees. We provide information on our benefits like work-from-home options and company-issued equipment.

## Health Benefits

Full-time, salaried employees are offered an option to join our group health insurance. 50% of the cost is paid for by ZBGC, and the rest is automatically taken from your biweekly paycheck.

## Work from home

If your job doesn't require you to be present at our premises, you can occasionally work from home (WFH).

When you are working from home, please use an internet connection and devices that are fast and secure. Choose a place without loud noises or distractions. Check-in with your team frequently to make collaboration easier.

If there is inclement weather (e.g., a blizzard) please check Slack, or your email to see if the office is officially closed. If you judge that your commute during inclement weather is dangerous, let your manager know. We will not force you to come to work if your safety is at stake or if there is an official travel warning.

## Remote working

Remote working refers to working from a non-office location on a temporary or permanent basis.

If you work remotely permanently, we ask that you adhere to our security, confidentiality, and equal opportunity policies just like your office-based colleagues.

## Parking

We expect you to keep our parking lot clean and park in the back of the main lot or the volunteer lot. Please behave responsibly to avoid causing damage, injury, or loss of property.

We will not assume any liability for theft, vandalism, fire, or damage regarding an employee's vehicle in our parking lot.

## Company-issued equipment

As an employee, you may work with a tablet device and hotspot. These are checked in and out at the office at the beginning and end of your shift. Unless otherwise mentioned in your contract, any equipment we offer belongs to our company and you may not sell it or give it away. You are also responsible for keeping our equipment safe and in as good condition as possible. If your equipment breaks or malfunctions, let us know so we can arrange to get it repaired.

## Theft and damage of company equipment

We ask you to inform us immediately if your equipment is stolen or damaged. We might be able to trace stolen laptops and cell phones. Please also file a theft statement (affidavit) with the police and submit a copy to us.

## Security of company-issued devices

We advise you to keep your company-issued computer, tablet, and cell phone secure. You can do this if you:

- Keep all devices password protected.
- Ensure you do not leave your devices unattended.
- Install security updates for browsers and other systems as soon as updates are available.
- Log into company accounts and systems through secure and private networks only.
- Follow all instructions for disk encryption, anti-malware protection, and password management that you received along with your equipment.
  
- Bring tablets in and charge them in the office at the end of the day

## Working hours, time off, and leave

### Working hours

Our company operates between 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 pm (5:30 pm during the fall/winter). PARD operates from 7:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. You may be scheduled to come to work at any time between those hours, depending on your team's needs. This is dependent on the project you are working on and whom you are working with.

Some employees may work after hours, too (e.g., for garden club meetings or events.) If you work in these shifts, you will follow a shift schedule as needed.

### Requested time off

Employees requesting time off for appointments or other scheduled events must make a time-off request with a manager no later than two weeks prior. Time needed that is more than one day must be requested at least 2 weeks beforehand and must then be approved by a manager. As we are a small staff, we will do our best to work with these requests as the schedule allows, however some requests may not work with what is needed for schedule coverage.

### Paid time off (PTO)

Salaried employees accrue 18 days of Paid Time Off (PTO) per year. Your PTO accrual begins the day you join our organization, and you receive 1.5 days per month. You can take your PTO at any time after your first week with us and can use it in advance of accrual if approved by your manager/supervisor.

You cannot transfer any remaining PTO to the next year. We encourage you to use your time off throughout the year.

## Blackout days

Vacation blackouts are a block of dates during which employees cannot schedule time off due to an expected increase in traffic or special event. Our vacation blackout days are as follows:

AISD spring break  
AISD winter break  
Yearly free days as designated by the city

## Holidays

We are off Friday, Saturday, and Sunday during Austin City Limits Festival due to the road and park closures. Also, during the Zilker Kite Festival, when applicable. We may also have closures as designated by the City Manager or Parks and Rec Department

Our company observes the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Independence Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

## Sick leave

We offer paid sick leave for hourly employees. Hourly employees accrue sick leave at a rate of .0333 hours per hour worked. You can take sick leave to recover from short-term illness, injuries, mental health issues, and other indispositions. If you have the flu or other contagious disease, please use your sick days.

If you become sick, inform your manager, and send a sick leave request in a private message thru Slack. You may take a partial day off or work from home, but we advise you to rest and recuperate for a day before returning to work.

Occasionally, we may ask you to submit a physician's note or other medical certification and/or complete a sick leave form. We will do this for insurance purposes if you are absent for more than three days for sick leave.

## Bereavement leave

Losing a loved one is traumatizing. If this happens to you while you work with us, we want to support you and give you time to cope and mourn.

For this reason, we offer three days of paid bereavement leave. You may take your bereavement leave on consecutive workdays:

- Arrange a funeral or memorial service.
- Attend a funeral or memorial service.
- Resolve matters of inheritance.
- Fulfill other family obligations.
- Mourn.

If you have to travel long-distance for a funeral or service, you can take two additional unpaid days off. If you need non-consecutive days off, please speak with your manager. If you require more time, please use your PTO.

## Leaving our company

In this section, we describe our procedures regarding the resignation and termination of our employees. We also refer to our progressive discipline process that may sometimes result in termination.

## Progressive discipline

Here we outline steps we will take to address employee misconduct. We want to give employees a chance to correct their behavior when possible and assist them in doing so. We also want to ensure that we thoroughly investigate and handle serious offenses.

Our progressive discipline process has five steps of increasing severity. These steps are:

- Verbal warning
- Informal meeting with supervisors
- Formal written reprimand
- Formal disciplinary meeting with a written reprimand
- Termination

Different offenses correspond to different steps in our disciplinary process. For example, minor, one-time offenses (e.g., breach of our dress code policy) will trigger Step 1. More severe violations (e.g., sexual harassment) will trigger step 5.

Managers may skip or repeat steps at their discretion. Our company may treat circumstances that differ from those described in this policy. We are always obliged to act fairly and lawfully and document every stage of our progressive discipline process.

Keep in mind that our company isn't obliged to follow the steps of our progressive discipline process. As you are employed "at-will" in the U.S, we may terminate you directly without launching a progressive discipline process. For serious offenses, we may terminate you without warning.

## Resignation

You resign when you voluntarily inform your manager that you will stop working for our company. We also consider you resigned if you don't come to work for three consecutive days without notice.

You are not obliged to give us advance notice before resigning. But, for efficiency's sake, and to make sure our workplace runs smoothly, we ask that you give at least two weeks' notice, if possible. If you hold a highly specialized or executive position, we ask that you give us at least a month's notice, when possible.

We accept verbal resignations, but we prefer that you submit a written and signed notice of resignation for our records. Whether you want to announce your resignation to your team is up to you, but we encourage you to be open.

## Forced resignation

You can resign anytime at your own free will and nobody should force you into resignation. Forcing someone into resigning (directly or indirectly) is constructive dismissal and we won't tolerate it. Specifically, we prohibit employees from:

- Creating a hostile or unpleasant environment.
- Demanding or coaxing an employee to resign.
- Victimizing, harassing, or retaliating against an employee.
- Forcing an employee to resign by taking unofficial adverse actions (e.g., demotions, increased workload).

## Termination

Terminating an employee is always unpleasant but sometimes necessary. If that happens, we want to ensure we act lawfully and respectfully.

We may terminate an employee either for cause or without cause.

- For cause termination is justified when an employee breaches their contract, engages in illegal activities (e.g., embezzlement), disrupts our workplace (e.g., harasses colleagues), performs below acceptable standards, or causes damage or financial loss to our company.

- Without cause termination refers to redundancies or layoffs that may be necessary if we cease some of our operations or re-assign job duties within teams. We will follow applicable laws regarding notice and payouts.

We may also compensate accrued vacation and sick leave upon termination, depending on local law. Whenever local law doesn't have relevant stipulations, we will pay accrued leave only to those who weren't terminated for cause.

## References

When we terminate employees, we may provide references for those who leave in good standing. This means that employees shouldn't have been terminated for cause. If you are laid off, you may receive references. Please ask your manager.

If you resign, you may ask for references and your manager has the right to oblige or refuse.

## Our Organization

### Conservancy Board

Executive Board and Board members help with fundraising, garden programming, and planning on its many committees.

### Operations Managers

Operations Managers handle all day-to-day operations of admissions and Gift Shop as well as coordinate with the AAGC and its many clubs.

Laura McCabe – [operationsmanager@zbgconservancy.org](mailto:operationsmanager@zbgconservancy.org)

Heather De La Garza – [operations@zbgconservancy.org](mailto:operations@zbgconservancy.org)

### Development Director

Development Director handles fundraising and memberships as well as Walk of Friends bricks and Bench donations.

Stephanie Hunter – [development@zbgconservancy.org](mailto:development@zbgconservancy.org)

### Public Relations Coordinator

The Public Relations Coordinator handles all social media, website content, event planning, and programming.

Monica Sivilli – [publicrelations@zbgconservancy.org](mailto:publicrelations@zbgconservancy.org)

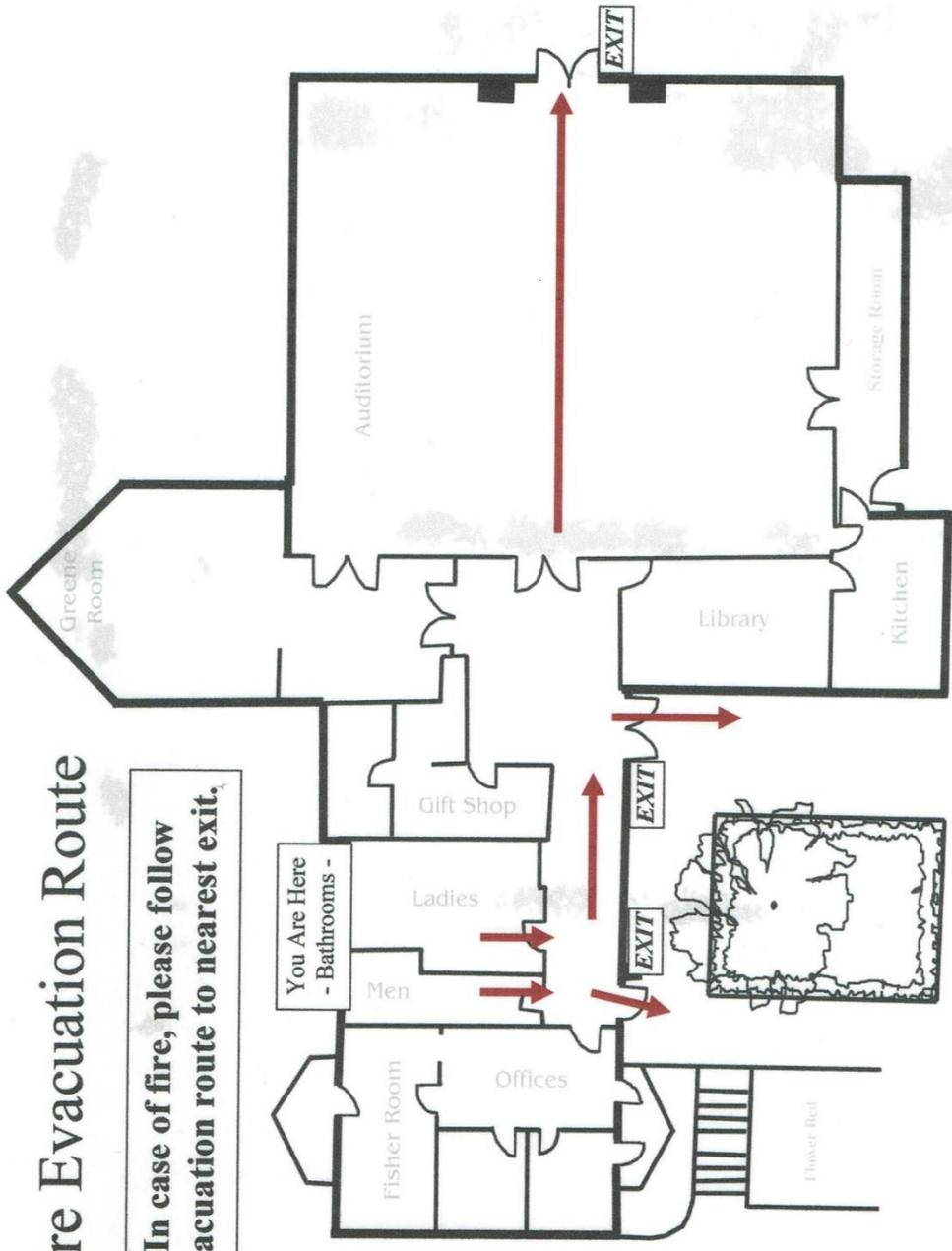
## Education Director

The Education Director handles educational programming, garden tours, interpretive signage, the internship program, and volunteer coordination.

Matthew Gaston – [education@zbgconservancy.org](mailto:education@zbgconservancy.org)

# Fire Evacuation Route

**In case of fire, please follow  
evacuation route to nearest exit.**



Austin Area Garden Center