

# CALIFORNIA JPIA

## Policy Library

**Policy Name:**  
Recommended Guidelines For The  
Design, Construction and Operation of Skate Parks

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## **RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES FOR THE DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION, AND OPERATION OF SKATE PARKS**

Members of the CALIFORNIA JOINT POWERS INSURANCE AUTHORITY are encouraged to consider the following guidelines to create a safe and enjoyable skate park for the members of their community and to reduce the frequency and severity of claims associated with the design, construction, and operation of skate parks.

### **I. SKATE PARK DESIGN**

1. Skate parks should be designed with input from participants, parents, business owners, homeowners, neighbors, and public safety personnel to ensure all issues are discussed prior to design and construction.
2. In order to maintain design immunities provided under state law, skate parks should be designed by licensed architects or landscape architects that are qualified and experienced in the design and construction of skate parks. The city council should review and approve of the skate park's design in accord with Government Code § 830.6.
3. Skate park design should include the following features: public telephone (within 50 yards), drinking fountains (within 50 yards) rest rooms (within 100 yards). A sufficient number of secured trash receptacles, preferably square, secured to the pavement, should be provided to prevent the accumulation of litter in and around the facility. Ample parking should be provided for skaters and spectators. Consideration should also be given to providing space for bleachers and concession activities.
4. Lighting that meets sports lighting standards should be installed if the skate park is to be operated after dusk.
5. Fencing should be installed around the designated skate park area to protect participants from dogs and children running into area and to protect spectators or passersby from being struck by skateboarders, in-line skaters, or errant skateboards. The fencing should be a minimum of eight feet above grade.
6. Design elements within the skate park should be spaced so participants maneuvering on one element are able to complete the maneuver and recover without interfering with other participants and without entering another element.
7. Participants of differing skill levels should have access to design elements of their skill levels without crossing areas requiring greater skill levels.
8. The skate park should be visible from the street. This will enable observation of the skate park by public safety personnel and other staff.

## **II. SKATE PARK CONSTRUCTION**

1. Licensed contractors that are qualified and experienced in the construction of skate parks should construct the park.
2. The city, architect, and contractor should work together to ensure the skate park is constructed as designed.

## **III. SKATE PARK OPERATION**

Both Supervised and Unsupervised skate parks:

1. The skate park should be used by skateboarders and in-line skaters only. All other activities should be prohibited.
2. Even if the skate park has been designed for mixed use (skateboards, in-line skates, and bicycles), mixed use should not be allowed in an unsupervised skate park.
3. Supervised skate parks can allow bicycles in the skate park at times separate from skateboard and in-line skaters if the skate park has been designed for mixed use. However, the architect must provide written design approval if bicycles are to be allowed.
4. The City should adopt an ordinance requiring any participant using the skate park to wear a helmet, elbow pads, and kneepads. In addition, the ordinance should prohibit participants from performing stunts, tricks, or luge skateboarding on all other public property.
5. The city should post signs at the skate park giving reasonable notice that any person using the skate park must wear a helmet, elbow pads, and knee pads, and that any person failing to do so will be subject to citation under the ordinance adopted in accord with section III (4).
6. Public safety personnel should aggressively enforce the ordinance adopted in accord with section III (4) by regularly driving by, observing, and citing any person in violation of the ordinance.
7. Weekly maintenance inspections should be conducted and documented using checklists provided by the CALIFORNIA JPIA. Any defects reported by the public should be documented. All repairs should be completed in a timely fashion. The affected portion of the park should be closed until repairs can be completed. All repairs should be documented. Records should be maintained in one location for at least five years.
8. All stickers, leaves, glass, cans, and trash should be removed on a daily basis.
9. Spectators should not be allowed in the designated skate park area.

10. Signs should be prominently posted with the following rules:

- **Skateboarding and in-line skating are hazardous activities.**
- **Skate at your own risk. Skateboards and in-line skates only.**
- Skate park hours are \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.
- No skateboarding or in-line skating on wet surfaces.
- Helmets, knee pads, and elbow pads required in the designated skate park area.
- Failure to wear helmets, kneepads, and elbow pads in the designated skate park area will subject persons to citation (Municipal Code \_\_\_\_\_).
- Skating on park curbs, parking lot, and entrance sidewalk is prohibited.
- No graffiti or tagging.
- No glass bottles.
- Dispose of trash in trash receptacles.
- No smoking, alcohol, or drug use.
- No intimidation, hazing, or fighting.
- No spectators are permitted in the designated skate park area.
- No unauthorized pieces of equipment, obstacles, or apparatus may be brought into the designated skate park area.
- No food or drink in the designated skate park area.
- No special events or contests are allowed in the designated skate park area unless authorized by the City.
- **The City reserves the right to eject anyone from the skate park at any time for any reason.**

11. The recommended sign content in section III (10) should be changed if the supervised skate park is going to allow bicycles in the designated skate park area at separate times from the skateboarding and in-line skating schedules. The changes should be as follows:

**Bullet one** should include bicycles as a hazardous activity along with skateboarding and in-line skating.

**Bullet two** should have the word bicycles added if the supervised skate park is going to allow bicycles access at separate times from skateboards and in-line skating.

12. The city should not charge admission to the skate park.

13. The city should not rent the skate park for parties or offer lessons for skateboarding or in-line skating.

14. If the skate park is to be supervised a portion of the day and unsupervised the rest, the city should include the information on the skate park signs section III (10) and keep a log of the supervised operating hours and the attendant's name.

15. The skate park attendant should be at least 18 years of age.
16. There should be no more than 35 skate park participants for each skate park attendant.
17. The skate park attendant should be trained on how to perform the functions of a skate park attendant.
18. The City should provide CPR – First Aid and Bloodborne Pathogen awareness training.
19. The skate park attendant should require registration and waiver forms be signed by each participant (if 18 or over) or by the parent or guardian (if under 18) in the presence of the attendant.
20. After the registration and waiver forms have been processed and signed, the skate park attendant should issue an ID card (photo if possible) to the participant to be used when entering the skate park. If a photo ID is not available, then an alternate ID provided by the participant will be necessary.
21. The skate park attendant should enforce the ordinance adopted in accord with section III (10) by observing, and communicating to any person in violation of the ordinance.
22. The City should provide back up for the skate park attendant (Police or Park Ranger) in the event of a confrontation.
23. The skate park attendant should provide assistance to injured skate park participants. Assistance may include calling for medical assistance, notifying the recreation supervisor, calling the emergency number provided by the registration information, providing first aid or CPR, and starting an initial Accident Information Form provided by the CALIFORNIA JPIA.
24. Loaning personal protection equipment is not recommended. If your agency allows equipment to be loaned, inspections must be performed (helmet, elbow pads, and knee pads) before each use. Documentation of inspections must be maintained for at least three years.
25. The city should maintain a record of all known or reported injuries sustained by skateboarders and in-line skaters in the skate park and report them to the state administrative office of the courts each year:

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Administrative Office of the Courts  
455 Golden Gate Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94102