

Definitions:

- Board Member: Individual who serves on Thurston County Inclusion's Board of Directors
- Event: An activity that is planned and sponsored by Thurston County Inclusion, including summer camp or year-round activities.
- Participant: Youth, ages 5 to 22 years old, with or without a disability (see "eligibility criteria")
- Participant's Adult (hereby called "Adult"): any legal parent, grandparent, caregiver, adult sibling, guardian of a participant, or participant themselves (if they are their own guardian).
- Staff: Individual under payroll at Thurston County Inclusion
- Volunteer: Individuals ages 14 or older who have passed a background check and submitted all necessary volunteer paperwork, including signing the liability release, confidentiality agreement, and medical release.

Participant Eligibility Criteria & Participant Adult Attendance

Thurston County Inclusion (TCI) invites all youth, ages 5 to 22 years old, to participate in our events. TCI considers disability and accessibility from the start and works to make all events as inclusive as possible. Our goal is to adapt our spaces to the participants rather than the participants needing to adapt to our space. Our staff are trained and available to support you in programs so that our participants can be as independent as possible. Areas that staff CAN NOT support participants:

- Some Toileting (see "toilet policy")
- Administering medications (except emergency medications such as asthma inhalers or EpiPens)
- Eating/Drinking
- Medical Care (i.e. colostomy, trachea, feeding tube, etc.)
- Wheelchair Transfers
- Escorting into or out of the Event Location
- Participants who cannot refrain from behaviors that pose a risk to self and others independently

If a participant has these needs and is anticipating needing assistance during the event time (i.e. needing to eat/drink or use the bathroom during a summer camp session), an adult must remain on-site. In some situations, such as interfering behaviors, an adult must stay with the participant at all times.

Further, we reserve the right to ask a participant's adult to stay in any scenario. This request will be made either verbally or over email. **If a parent, caregiver or sibling has a disqualifying offense under Chapter 74.34 RCW, they are ineligible to stay with their child at a TCI event.**

Participant Registration Forms

We ask that you update your participant forms each year between April and June.

Participant: Volunteer Ratio

This policy is applicable for events where the TCI Executive Director has determined the participant's adult does not need to remain on-premises. TCI ratio was developed with the understanding that approximately 80% of our participants have a disability. The proper ratio will be determined assuming a 60% attendance rate for year-round events and an 80% attendance rate for summer camp. If these ratios are not met at the time of the event (i.e. more participants than expected or volunteer cancellations), adults of arriving participants will be required to stay.

We will require two staff or board members at every event regardless of the number of participants. Board Members' requirements are included in the "Board Member Back-Up Policy."

Age	Number of TCI Volunteers*	Number of Participants without Adult Attending
Elementary School (about 5-11 years old)	1	6
Middle School - 10th Grade (about 11 - 15 years old)	1	7
11th Grade - Transition (about 15 - 22 years old)	1	8

* This total may include additional staff or board members beyond the two required.

Situations requiring a lower ratio:

- If a participant is out of the line of sight of the main program (bathroom, hallway, etc.), at least two volunteers, staff, or board members must be present.
- Some participants may require one-on-one attention (see section on "one-on-one eligibility")

For events with multiple age groups, the youngest age group shall determine the ratio. These ratios may adjust depending on the location at the discretion of TCI's Executive Director. We reserve the right to cancel the event if we feel that these ratios are not appropriate for the participants attending.

Toilet Policy

Only TCI Staff and Board Members (over the age of 18) are allowed to help with toileting needs. We do not have a large capacity to help with toileting, so we encourage adults to assist participants with the bathroom before the event and after the event as needed. A form must be completed before TCI can help with toileting and menstrual care. We are willing to help with

toileting needs for cases that *do not* require a changing table (we often do not have access to a changing table). This would include:

- Prompting to use the bathroom, wash hands, wipe, etc.
- Helping button up pants/pull them down
- Setting on the toilet and/or lifting up to reach the sink
- Helping wipe after using the bathroom
- Providing a change of clothes for accidents (we keep these on hand)
- Assistance with basic menstrual care (excluding tampons and menstrual cups)
- Reminding to use the bathroom

We reserve the right to call a participant's adult in situations where we do not feel comfortable, are unable to help, are unwilling to help, or feel that the participant would be more comfortable with someone else.

Behaviors Resulting in Removal

We recognize that all participants have unique backgrounds and circumstances. Thurston County Inclusion is dedicated to understanding each of those circumstances and a decision to make a warning is never made lightly. TCI staff will work with the participant's adult (as much as possible) through various communication methods to ensure the best support is being given before a decision is made. We ask that adults support the process that we go through to ensure the well-being of their participant(s).

Participants must maintain proper conduct while attending Thurston County Inclusion's program. We hold the participant's adult(s), staff, and volunteers to higher behavioral expectations than the participants. The participant's adult behavior is considered separately from their participant(s). Thurston County Inclusion has a three-warning policy for participants:

1. First Infraction: A verbal or written warning to the participant's adult; discussion on solutions for the participant or adult
2. Second Infraction: A written warning to the participant's adult(s); one of the participant's adults must stay with the participant at events
3. Third Infraction: No longer allowed to participate

The three-warning policy may not apply to the participant's adults. Their situation will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and communicated verbally or by email. The participant's adults may be asked to leave the event immediately.

Any necessary warnings to participants or adults will be communicated by the TCI staff and/or board members attending events.

The following are examples of behaviors that will result in an infraction:

- Assault or injury to others
- Sexual aggression
- Possession of prohibited items, like firearms or drugs

- Self-harm and injury
- Property destruction, theft, arson
- Chronic bullying and threatening
- Intentional endangerment of others
- Sending a participant to the program sick
- Sending a participant to camp without their needed medication
- Refusing to complete required paperwork
- Leaving a participant at camp when the adult was asked to stay
- Repeatedly failing to pick up a participant within 10 minutes of the event ending

Depending on the severity of the infraction, any of the above could result in no longer being able to attend events. These situations are always evaluated on an individual and case-by-case basis and can be re-evaluated after six months. Our goal at Thurston County Inclusion is to work with our participant's adults to ensure a successful return to events.

When a 2nd or 3rd infraction is issued, the TCI Executive Director is responsible for notifying the Board President within 5 Business Days using the appropriate form.

If a parent, caregiver or sibling has a disqualifying offense under Chapter 74.34 RCW, they are ineligible to stay with their child at a TCI event.

Participant Left at Activity

If the participant's adults fail to pick up their participant after 10 minutes, the Executive Director or any available TCI Staff or Board Members will call the participant's primary contact numbers. If contact with the participant's adult is not established, the Executive Director will call all the emergency contact(s) numbers. If the participant has not been picked up after 45 minutes, the DO will call 911 and follow their instructions. The Executive Director and one other available TCI Staff, Board Member or Volunteer, will remain with the participant until the situation is resolved. In the event that the two Staff, Board Member or Volunteer cannot stay, the Executive Director should plan to call board members to come help.

Illness Policy

The health and safety of our participants and volunteers are a top priority. To protect everyone involved, we ask that you do not send any participant to a TCI event if the participant is feeling unwell. Please ensure the participant is symptom-free for at least 24 hours prior to attending a TCI event. Symptoms that require staying home include, but are not limited to:

- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Rash
- Persistent cough
- Fever (100.0°F or higher)
- Contagious conditions such as COVID-19, head lice, or pink eye

By keeping participants home when they are sick, you contribute to a safe and healthy environment for all.

One-on-One Attention

We offer one-on-one attention for participants who need constant supervision and support from a volunteer to engage in events or prefer to venture away from the group. All of our one-on-ones are volunteers, and many of them are high school students. Please be aware that if your participant will need more advanced assistance, we encourage you to arrange that.

A TCI Staff or Board Member will assess if TCI can provide the participant with one-on-one support. This will be done at a previous TCI event and/or a designated pre-summer orientation. Participants will be assessed each year at a minimum. To get an assessment, TCI must be notified via email (info@thurstoncountyinclusion.org) prior to an event and an adult must stay with the participant for their first event.

TCI has two part-time employees and is otherwise volunteer-run. We cannot always guarantee that we will have one-on-one volunteers available for your child. If we do not have an adequate number of one-on-one volunteers, the participant's adult will be asked to stay with their children and one-on-one volunteers available will be on a first come-first serve basis.

You can find more TCI Policies in our [Emergency Preparedness Plan](#).