



IPRA Workforce Recruitment Digital Resource Kit

Instruction Guide





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Welcome!

Thank you for participating in the IPRA Workforce Recruitment Initiative! This campaign and digital resource kit are designed to support and enhance your employee recruitment efforts by raising awareness of the meaningful careers available at Illinois parks, recreation, and conservation agencies.

To ensure the campaign resonates with your target audience, we conducted a series of interviews with IPRA members and reviewed secondary research. This helped us understand the appeal of pursuing a career in Illinois parks, recreation, and conservation—as well as the barriers—and enabled us to narrow our focus to two primary audiences: entry-level job seekers and mid-career professionals.

Campaign Theme:

Take a Walk in the Park!

The best recruitment campaigns generate enthusiasm, curiosity, and action. The IPRA *“Take a Walk in the Park”* theme cleverly communicates the exciting and rewarding career opportunities offered by the industry in Illinois. The phrase *“a walk in the park”* suggests that the decision to pursue a career in parks and recreation is an easy one. The verb *“take”* emphasizes that this is a conscious choice—one that individuals can make to start a rewarding, meaningful career.

The theme resonates with a broad audience and can be easily tailored to various roles, seasonal needs, and target demographics. Be sure to emphasize all positions, not just those in parks, recreation, and conservation, but also roles in marketing, IT, landscape management, finance, and more.

Who Are We Talking To?

The campaign is designed around two key candidate personas:

First-Job Jamie (FJJ)

Entry-level job seeker looking for flexible opportunities that are not your typical desk job, with a lot of room for advancement and great benefits.

- Source: high school and career counselors/ summer interns/college and community college programs/adjacent programs (finance, HR, marketing majors)
- Age: under 30
- Prefers a dynamic, flexible work environment
- Values on-the-job creativity and hands-on learning as well as working in and contributing to their community



Career-Change Charlie (CCC)

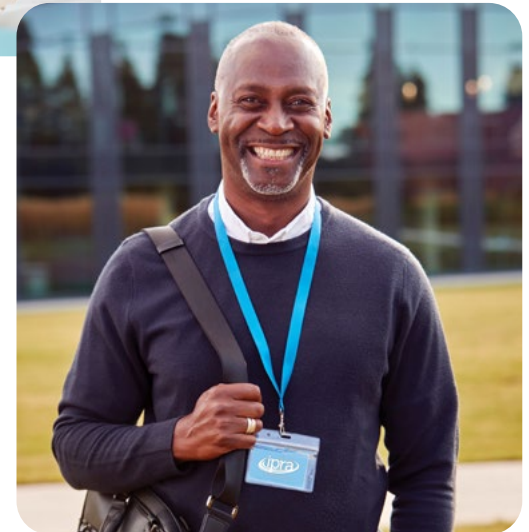
Mid-career professional seeking meaningful career transition.

- Source: private sector
- Age: 30+
- Feels unfulfilled in their current role and seeks purpose-driven work within their community
- Highly values competitive benefits, job stability, and opportunities to advance

Commonalities

Though different, both personas share these traits:

- Seek flexibility and work-life balance
- Passionate about serving their community
- Seek a rewarding career with impact
- Appreciate upward mobility or advancement opportunities



What's Included in This Kit?

This digital resource kit provides ready-to-use recruitment materials designed to help your agency, department, or educational institution attract new employees and showcase the meaningful careers available in Illinois parks, recreation, and conservation.



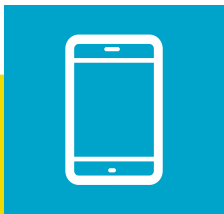
1. Posters (2)

- One poster per audience segment
- Editable PDF and InDesign file in three sizes: 24" x 36", 11" x 17", and 8.5" x 11"



2. Flyers (2)

- One flyer per audience segment
- Editable PDF and InDesign file; 8.5" x 11"



3. Social Media Post Templates (4)

- Two editable posts per audience segment
- Sized for LinkedIn, Instagram, and Facebook



4. Digital Banner Ads (2)

- One static display ad per audience segment
- Editable InDesign file in three sizes: 728 x 90, 300 x 250, and 160 x 600

How to Use These Materials

Posters

- Print and hang up at job fairs, community centers, and parks/rec and conservation district events to connect with job seekers who want meaningful work.
- Display prominently on-site at all agency programs and events.
- Work with your local school district, library, and village hall to display on-site.
- Provide to chambers of commerce so they can add to local business bulletin boards.
- Post on your facility's bulletin boards in high-traffic areas (lobbies, locker rooms, fitness centers, etc.).



How to Use These Materials

Flyers

- Print and distribute at job fairs, community centers, and parks/rec and conservation district events to connect with job seekers who want meaningful work.
- Attach to emails when reaching out to potential applicants, highlighting the opportunity to make a difference in their community.
- Post on your facility's bulletin boards in high-traffic areas (lobbies, locker rooms, fitness centers, etc.).
- Work with your local school district, library, and village hall to attach to newsletters or emails.
- Distribute to high school career counselors for display in their offices or hallways.
- Include in new-hire (seasonal) welcome pack or at training, and again at the end of their seasonal employment.



How to Use These Materials

Social Media Posts

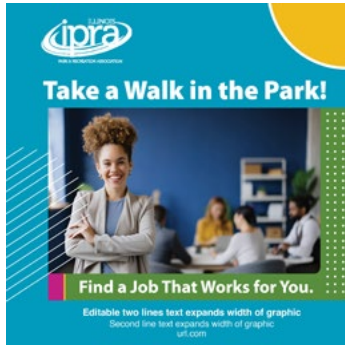
- It's easy to create social posts. Copy and paste the text provided in the kit—or write your own. Then customize the editable section of the appropriate graphic with specific details (job opening, your agency name and/or URL, upcoming job fair, etc.) and attach.
- Use relevant hashtags to increase reach (#SeriousFun, #CareerGrowth, #MakeADifference). Add location- and job-specific hashtags to target the right audience (e.g., #ParkJobsIL, #AquaticCareers).
- Tag @IPRA and encourage employees to share. This expands visibility and shows your participation in the initiative.
- Include a clear call to action (CTA). Add a link to the job application page and prompt immediate action (e.g., “Apply Now!”).
- Share as Instagram Stories or Facebook Reels to boost visibility and engagement at the top of feeds.
- Engage with comments and messages. Respond to questions, thank commenters, and direct them to apply, showing that your agency values communication.



Editable



Not Editable



First-Job Jamie

Post 1A

Image/Graphic Text:

Take a Walk in the Park!

Find a Job that Works for You.

Caption:

Ready to turn a fun, flexible part-time job into serious experience? 🌟 Work in parks and recreation. Gain real-world skills while working with amazing people and experiencing something new every day!

➡️ Apply today! (link to job page)

🕒 Flexible schedules

💰 Competitive pay

📄 Resume-building experience

#SeriousFun #FlexibleWork #CareerGrowth

Post 1B

Image/Graphic Text:

Take a Walk in the Park!

Work Where Fun Meets Opportunity.

Caption:

Need a job that works with your schedule? Parks and recreation agencies are hiring for roles that provide flexible hours, professional experience, and the opportunity to contribute to your community.

➡️ Apply today! (link to job page)

✅ Set your own schedule

📈 Gain valuable skills

👏 Make a difference

#SeriousFun #JobOpportunities

#MakeAnImpact



Career-Change Charlie

Post 2A

Image/Graphic Text:

Take a Walk in the Park!

Lead with Purpose.

Caption:

Exploring your next career move? Parks and recreation leadership roles offer professional growth, work-life balance, and the opportunity to make a real impact in your community.

We're seeking experienced professionals looking for:

- Excellent benefits
- Meaningful work
- Work-life balance

Ready to take the next step in your career?

[➡ Explore Opportunities Now](#)
(Link to job page here)

#LeadershipCareers #ParksAndRecreation
#CommunityImpact



Post 2B

Image/Graphic Text:

Take a Walk in the Park!

And Take Your Career in a New Direction.

Caption:

Looking to leverage your experience in a position that makes a real difference? Join our parks and recreation team and play an important role in the local community. We offer competitive benefits, professional growth opportunities, and flexibility for work-life balance.

[➡ Explore Opportunities Now](#)
(Link to job page here)

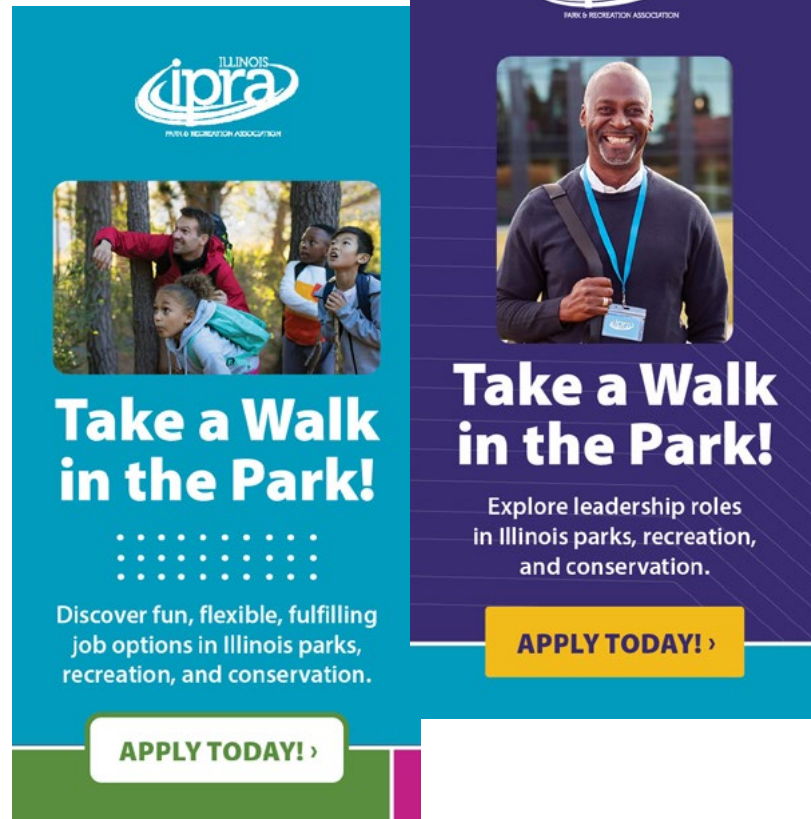
#Leadership #CareerGrowth
#MakeADifference



How to Use These Materials

Digital Banner Ad

- Add the banner ad to your website's job recruitment page to attract candidates actively searching for meaningful careers.
- Include it in email campaigns to showcase the opportunity for growth, purpose, and impact in your agency.
- Share in newsletters and digital outreach efforts to ensure potential applicants see the value of a career in parks, recreation, and conservation.
- Share with high schools, career counselors, colleges, etc., to put in their newsletter or on their website during opportune times.



Additional Tips for Success

- Personalize your posts by adding highlights of your local job opportunities and agency-specific perks. Sample posts: “All employees receive a free membership to our newly renovated gym!” and “We’re hiring lifeguards for the summer! Enjoy flexible hours, competitive pay, and free certification training. Apply today!”
 - Encourage current employees to share posts to expand reach and engage potential applicants.
 - Use the messaging strategy to maintain a consistent and compelling tone that aligns with IPRA’s Workforce Initiative.
 - Offer seasonal staff the opportunity to “shadow” employees in different departments.
 - Survey seasonal employees to get their feedback on their experience. Leave space for comments so you can repurpose them for social media and other recruitment materials.
 - During seasonal training, build in time for staff in different departments to briefly discuss their work.
- Work with local high schools! Attend career fairs, offer to speak to career exploration classes/clubs. Be sure to highlight roles outside of traditional “recreation” roles.
 - Work with National Honor Society and Key Club students who need volunteer hours, exposing them to parks and recreation.
 - Make college connections. Partner with university programs (recreation, marketing, business, finance, etc.) and offer internships, job shadowing, and guest speakers. Consider signing up for a [Handshake](#) account recruiting college students for positions.
 - Establish relationships with local [community colleges](#).
 - Trade schools and nontraditional education programs are excellent resources. Connect with vocational schools to promote roles like facility maintenance, IT, childcare, and groundskeeping.



Using these materials can help your agency grow a strong and dedicated workforce while showcasing the rewarding careers available in Illinois parks, recreation, and conservation. Together, we can inspire and attract passionate and dedicated employees.

Questions? Reach out to Heather Weishaar at IPRA: heather@ILipra.org
Thank you for being part of this recruitment initiative!