

GARDENS OF GOLDEN GATE PARK

Position Title: Garden Camp Counselor

Hours: Up to 40 hours, Full-time (Monday-Friday)

Role Classification: Temporary, June 22 to August 7, 2026 & June 22 to August 14, 2026

Exemption: Non-Exempt

Reports to: Senior Program Manager

Salary: \$18.67-\$21.50 per hour

ABOUT THE GARDENS OF GOLDEN GATE PARK

The mission of Gardens of Golden Gate Park is to connect people to plants, the planet, and each other. Gardens of Golden Gate Park is a public/private partnership between the San Francisco Recreation & Park Department (RPD) and the San Francisco Botanical Garden Society (SFBGS) to jointly operate the Conservatory of Flowers, Japanese Tea Garden, and San Francisco Botanical Garden. A Lease & Management Agreement between RPD and SFBGS, approved by both the Recreation & Park Commission and the Board of Supervisors, sets the terms of the partnership. The agreement is a cooperative management agreement that outlines the roles and responsibilities for each partner. Key areas of responsibility for SFBGS include volunteer engagement, education, visitor experience, philanthropy, membership, marketing, and other functions. RPD is responsible for horticulture and facility management and maintenance, master planning and capital improvements conducted with SFBGS, and other functions. Together, RPD and SFBGS collaborate on collections management within the Gardens.

The Conservatory of Flowers is a national, state, and local landmark and a place of exceptional beauty. Built in 1879, the Conservatory was the first formal structure erected in Golden Gate Park and remains an internationally renowned icon, displaying and cultivating unusual plants to heighten awareness of the pressing need to preserve threatened rainforest environments.

The Japanese Tea Garden is the oldest operating public Japanese garden in North America. This garden provides visitors from around the world with an opportunity to experience the natural beauty, tranquility, and harmony of a Japanese-style garden and was originally created as an exhibit for the 1894 California Midwinter International Exposition.



San Francisco Botanical Garden opened in 1940 and is a 55-acre living museum within Golden Gate Park, showcasing 8,000 different kinds of plants from around the world. San Francisco's oceanic climate with cool dry summers, mild wet winters, and presence of fog allows the Garden to grow a diverse array of species from around the world.

POSITION SUMMARY

San Francisco Botanical Garden's Garden Camp program primarily serves children in grades K-5 with all outdoor programming that focuses on educational and positive social-emotional development with peers in nature. Garden Camp connects children to plants through a combination of structured, themed activities and open-ended time to develop curiosity, initiative, imagination, and creativity. Curriculum will revolve around four main themes: gardening, art, wellness, and ecology.

Counselors will be responsible for the care, comfort, and safety of participants. Counselors' primary objectives are to provide an engaging, fun, educational, age-appropriate, and safe experience for participants; provide excellent customer service to parents and caregivers; work collaboratively within the Learning and Engagement team; lead by example; and inform the development of the Camp programs in seasons to come.

Counselors are members of the Programs and Partnerships Department and report to the Garden Camp Director. In this role, they are expected to adhere to the program's COVID-19 Health and Safety Plan and all other safety protocols, including completion of Mandated Reporter and First Aid/CPR training.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Essential Duties

- Provide in-person care for children with a co-counselor in a public setting.
- Build and nourish positive relationships with campers while promoting a sense of nature connection among the participants.
- Enforce camp rules, policies, and safety guidelines consistently, ensuring a safe and secure camp environment.

Content Delivery and Community Building

- Foster a community that values relationships, thrives on empathy, sees opportunity before challenge, uses positive reinforcement, and anticipates joy around every turn. Promote character development and model positive and inclusive culture.

- Always ensure the physical and emotional safety of all campers through routine safety and wellness checks.
- Communicate with participant families to foster a warm camp community, and ensure a positive, open dialogue about health, safety, and other issues as they arise.
- Collaborate within the camp team and across departments to ensure both the Garden and campers thrive.
- Provide play and learning experiences which foster engagement with the natural world, develop empathy for all living things, and increase understanding and appreciation of plants and our relationship to them.

Camp Group Management and Support

- Contribute to curriculum with additional, appropriate, thematic content and activities that align with curricular framework.
- Stock and manage camp materials and supplies.
- Lead a group size of 10-12 participants in partnership with a co-Counselor.
- Attend weekly staff meetings.

EXPERIENCE & QUALIFICATIONS

- Coursework in Early childhood Education OR equivalent experience.
- Experience teaching or working with preschool and/or elementary school-aged children.
- Coursework in environmental education, botany, ecology, or other life sciences is highly desirable.
- Demonstrate a passion and respect for the natural world. Be willing to get dirty, teach through play, and engage deeply.
- Will need to complete CPR Training and Mandated Reporter training by June 26th, 2026.
- Commitment to full-time work either June 22nd through August 7th OR August 14th, 2026.

ADDITIONAL EXPECTATIONS

- Ability to meet the physical demands of working with children in an all-outdoor setting. Like lifting at least 50 pounds, ability to run short distances and walk extensively, transition from sit to stand easily, and sit on the ground with campers, and occasionally working in varying weather conditions.
- Fluency in a secondary language (especially Spanish, Mandarin, Tagalog, or Russian) highly favored.

- Social-emotional competencies are highly valued.

RETURNING COUNSELORS

If you have previously been employed as a Garden Camp Counselor and are hoping to return, please email gardencamp@gggp.org with a brief reintroduction to yourself, why you are interested in returning, and what you have learned from previous summer experiences. We will reach out to set up a time for an interview.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND TO APPLY: Complete application with attached cover letter at <https://recruiting.paylocity.com/recruiting/jobs/All/99885d66-fdde-45ea-b169-b55cfb505be0/Gardens-of-Golden-Gate-Park>

Gardens of Golden Gate Park is an equal opportunity employer and encourages candidates with diverse backgrounds and experiences to apply.

We are an Equal Opportunity Employer. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, age (40 or older), disability, genetic information, or any other category protected by law.