



PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

Division:	Facilities
Title:	Sports field Allocation Procedure and Guidelines
Date Approved/Revised:	March 2021

INTRODUCTION:

The Township of Wilmot is dedicated to fostering an active, engaged, and healthy community. The Township has identified provision, operation, and management of sports fields as important to achieving this goal. The Townships goal is to promote and encourage participation in outdoor sports to the overall benefit of the community.

The Township requires Sports field Facility Allocation Guidelines and Procedures to inform the allocation of Township-owned sports field facilities. As the population of the Township of Wilmot continues to grow and change, demand for sports fields is anticipated to increase.

These guidelines help to ensure facilities are used to the greatest benefit for the entire community, to provide a broad range of activities, in a fair, equitable and consistent manner, and to address operational needs, while optimizing the use of the existing inventory of fields.

PURPOSE:

The Township of Wilmot has attempted in past years to accommodate all sports field/ball diamond requests from various organizations and groups. With a limited number of sports fields available, all efforts have been made to accommodate expanding requests from current organizations and emerging groups. These procedures will serve as a guide for the sports field allocation process and to more clearly define and communicate how sports fields will be managed, allocated and distributed.

The goal of these guidelines is to promote and encourage participation in sports to the overall benefit of the community.

For the purposes of these guidelines, youth are considered 18 and under, and adults over 18 years of age.

These guidelines apply to:

- All sports fields owned, managed, and operated by the Township
- Township staff responsible for facility management and operations, facility allocation and bookings, and recreation programming
- All sports field users

COMMUNICATION:

The guidelines and procedures will be available on the Township's website, and will be communicated to sports field users as part of the rental application process.

DEFINITIONS:

Affiliated Minor Sport Organizations: A group that delivers league-based programs and/or services that directly benefit local youth and residents. Minor Sport programs rely on and are run by local volunteers who serve as executive members, coaches, team managers, special event organizers, and fundraisers. Youth are defined as ages 17 and younger. 60% of participants must reside in Wilmot Township.

Affiliated Community Groups: A community organization operating as not-for-profit that works collaboratively with and is formally recognized by the Township of Wilmot in a manner that is consistent with Township Affiliation Policy 2021-006. For specific information and requirements related to Affiliation, refer to the Wilmot Parks, Facility and Recreation Services Affiliation Policy.

Board(s) of Education: refers to the Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) and the Waterloo Catholic District School Board (WCDSB).

Non-Affiliated Seasonal Renter(s): non-affiliated groups or organizations who use sports fields/ball diamonds on at least a weekly basis for an entire season or the majority of a season and hold a contract in good standing with the Township of Wilmot

Occasional Renter: is a non-affiliated group or organization that rents space occasionally i.e. family gathering, birthday party etc.

Service Clubs: A service club is defined firstly by its service mission and secondly its membership benefits, such as social occasions, networking, and personal growth opportunities that encourage involvement.

Township of Wilmot Programs: programs and other initiatives that are organized by staff or provided by contractors on behalf of the municipality.

Sports Field Allocation

The Township of Wilmot will responsibly manage its resources to ensure optimum usage and programming and to reflect municipal directives and goals.

Sports field allocation in the Township will reflect municipal, provincial and federal directives and resolutions where applicable. Other considerations include population, group registration, utilization and participation patterns and trends.

On an annual basis, Township staff will organize a meeting with major sports field user groups to review, define and/or confirm the upcoming season hours of operation, restrictions, facility closures and holidays, proposed upcoming rate changes and relevant facility announcements. This meeting will also be used as an opportunity for users to request times for tournaments or other special events, trade times with other groups, to share information, make inquiries and liaise with other members of the user community for the upcoming season.

Before booking the upcoming season, Township staff will review issues from the previous season, the expressed needs of the users, the times available and distribution from the previous year. Allocation of sports fields will work towards the overall goal of an allocation of approximately 80% youth and 20% adult related rentals and programs. The early evening time slots are primarily intended for youth, and the later time slots are primarily intended for older youth and adult use. Following the Parks & Recreation Master Plan, every attempt will be made to serve the needs of the community within all age groups regarding allocation of time with an emphasis on youth.

Booking Process

Groups are asked to appoint no more than two representatives to liaise between the Township and the group itself. Only bookings requested through the designated booking representative for the group will be accepted.

Time slots for non-tournament bookings are 1 hour for the artificial turf, 90 minutes for soccer fields, and 2 hours for ball diamond use. The 2-hour time slot for ball diamond use allows for 1¾ hour of play and 15 minutes to clear the field and rake home plate.

Customers must adhere to the start and end times of bookings as per the rental permit.

Bookings will be considered as per the previous years scheduled hours using the following order:

- Tournaments & special events
- Affiliated Minor Sporting Groups
- Local organized adult groups

- Board of Education programs
- New tournaments/special events
- Non-resident adult groups
- Occasional rentals
- New requests

Further Scheduling Considerations for the Previous Groups

Tournaments & Special Events - The Township of Wilmot recognizes and supports tournaments and special events for the revenue generation they provide not only to the Township but also the economic benefits to the community at large.

Any new tournament or special event requests will be considered individually to determine the impact it will have on regularly scheduled users.

Tournament schedules will be required no later than 14 days prior to the beginning of the tournament. No changes to tournament schedules will be accepted after the 14 day deadline and the tournament will be responsible to pay for all time booked. Failure to use all time booked for tournament purposes may result in reduced time allocated for future events.

The Township reserves the right to change the times allocated to user groups if operational efficiencies or desired percentage allocations (approximately 80% youth, 20% adult) are not being met. In these circumstances every attempt will be made to find an equitable replacement.

If the current rental group disbands or fails to reapply for time in subsequent seasons, they will lose their rental time slot. The time slot is not transferable and it is not permitted to sublet.

Rental contracts are for the current season only. Allocation will be reviewed annually.

Occasional Customers

Occasional Customers will be accommodated based on availability, on a first come, first serve basis upon the completion of seasonal allocation permits.

Rental fees will be charged in accordance with the Township of Wilmot's Fees and Charges By-Law, which are posted on the Township of Wilmot website.

Conflict Resolution

Rental time conflicts may happen from time-to-time. These conflicts will first be discussed within the annual User Group Meeting. If no resolution is achieved in the initial discussion, the affected groups will be brought together for discussion and resolution with the Manager of Parks, Facilities & Operations and

the Manager of Customer Service and Community Development. Should no resolution be obtained, the decision of the Manager of Parks, Facilities & Operations and the Manager of Customer Service and Community Development will be final. Conflict resolution will involve considering the following, listed in no particular order, when a decision must be made:

- Municipal Directives and Resolutions of Council
- Historical allocation
- Overall percentage split in time (80% youth, 20% adult)
- Operational efficiencies

The Township of Wilmot reserves the right to curfew any group, game or practice to maintain the assigned schedule between groups. It is the responsibility of each group to ensure enough time is booked to complete their desired activity.

The Township agrees to provide the user groups with as much advance notice as possible in the event of any regular maintenance or emergency shutdown of facilities that may interfere with the rental times.

In the event that facilities are not available to user groups by reason of construction, mechanical or structural failure, damage or destruction by fire, strikes, labour disputes, riots or other accident, act of God, action by government, or other circumstances beyond the control of the Township, then for so long as any such impediment exists, the Township shall be relieved of its obligations hereunder and the group shall not be entitled to compensation for any damage, inconvenience, nuisance, or discomfort thereby occasioned.

If a user group wishes to cancel one or more scheduled times, written notice of cancellation shall be given to the Facilities Scheduling Clerk, not less than 2 business days prior. With the exception of rain-outs or other inclement weather including extreme heat, no alterations to the schedule will be accepted after the 2-business day deadline and the user group will be responsible for all time booked. For rain outs, please refer to the Sports Field Usage Delay and or Cancellation Procedure which is included with your rental permit. The Manager of Customer Service and Community Development at his/her sole discretion, may accept shorter notice for extenuating circumstances. Email is considered acceptable written notice. Cancellation fees may apply as approved in the annual Fees and Charges By-law.

Guidelines and Procedures Review

The Sports Field Allocation Guidelines and Procedures will be reviewed annually. Concerns and questions related to the guidelines may be brought forward at the annual User Group Meeting to identify any required changes to all concerned groups and organizations.