MUNICIPALITY OF BARRINGTON
RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Recreation Facility Allocation Guidelines

Purpose:

To ensure that our community recreation spaces are scheduled and managed in a fair, transparent, and consistent manner. This process prioritizes recreation-first uses that promote health, inclusion, and community engagement, while balancing the needs of individuals, organizations, and partners. By applying clear priorities and guidelines, we maximize access, support active living, and keep our facilities welcoming and vibrant for all.

Values Statement:

Our recreation facilities are shared community spaces designed to promote **health, inclusion, and community engagement through active recreation.** We believe that access to movement opportunities is essential to the physical, social, and mental well-being of all residents.

We are guided by the following values:

- **Mission-Driven Decisions:** All allocation decisions are grounded in our department's mission to strengthen community health, inclusion, and engagement through active living and recreation.
- **Equity & Access:** Facilities, programs, and events are open and welcoming to all. We strive to reduce barriers by offering free or low-cost opportunities, and by keeping recreation as accessible and inclusive as possible for people of all ages and abilities.
- **Recreation Lens:** We apply a recreation-first perspective in all scheduling, prioritizing uses that encourage activity, inclusion, and community engagement. Facility access is prioritized for programs that foster the greatest public benefit, particularly for youth and community recreation groups.
- **Fair & Transparent Process:** Allocation is guided by clear timelines, priorities, and policies. Complex or high-demand bookings are reviewed by an internal team or decision-making matrix to ensure fairness and consistency.
- **Collaboration & Stewardship:** We work alongside individuals, organizations, and community partners to maximize opportunities for participation, volunteerism, and shared use of facilities, while maintaining stewardship of these spaces as vital public assets.

By upholding these values, we ensure that the Sherose Island Recreation Complex including the Sandy Wickens Memorial Arena, Recreation Centre, Municipal Outdoor Pool, and Sports Fields remain vibrant, inclusive spaces at the heart of a healthy, active, and connected community.

Allocation Process:

Facility allocation will occur twice per year to align with community recreation seasons:

- **Fall/Winter Season (Arena, Indoor Programs):** September – April/May
- **Spring/Summer Season (Pool, Fields, Batting Cages, Summer Recreation Programs):** April/May– September
- **Community Use of Schools:** Follow the Fall/ Winter schedule for allocation and use for the school year.

Requests will be accepted within published application windows prior to each season.

- **Step 1 – Returning Users:** Existing user groups will have the first opportunity to request facility time during the seasonal application period.
- **Step 2 – New Users:** After returning user requests are reviewed, new user groups may apply for available time. *New users may be considered for priority over existing user requests if they meet allocation priorities and undergo a review by staff*.
- **Step 3 – Final Review:** Complex or high-demand requests will be reviewed by staff using a decision-making matrix to ensure fairness, transparency, and alignment with community priorities.

Tiered Priority System:

When allocating space, the following tiered priorities will apply:

1. **Municipal Recreation Programs** (e.g., swim lessons, day camps, youth programs)
2. **Local Sport Organizations / Youth Physical Activity Groups**
3. **Community Partners Offering Recreation or Health Initiatives**
4. **Public Events and Cultural Gatherings**
5. **Private and Non-Recreational Bookings**

This system ensures recreation-first scheduling while still allowing flexibility for cultural, community, and private uses.

Limits on Non-Recreational Bookings

- Non-recreational or private bookings may not exceed **four consecutive dates** in peak demand times.
- Long-term recurring bookings will only be permitted with a clause that allows bumping for municipal or community recreation events.

Transparent Communication

- Facility use policies, timelines, and application processes will be published publicly.
- Applicants will be notified of decisions in writing.
- Usage statistics will be collected to guide future allocation and demonstrate community benefit.

Allocation Priorities:

When scheduling decisions must be made between competing requests, the following principles will guide allocation:

1. **Recreation First:** Does the request support health, inclusion, and community engagement through active recreation?
2. **Youth Priority:** Does the booking provide opportunities for youth physical activity or development?
3. **Community Impact:** How many residents will benefit, and what is the breadth of community inclusion?
4. **Accessibility & Inclusion:** Does the program reduce barriers to participation (low cost, open access, inclusive design)?
5. **Fairness & Balance:** Does the booking schedule provide fair access across groups while maintaining facility sustainability?

Complex or competing requests will be reviewed by staff using these principles and, if necessary, an internal decision-making matrix to ensure consistency and fairness.

Seasonal Allocation Timeline:

Fall/Winter Season (Ice & Indoor Programs: September – March)

- **July 1 – September 1:** Application window opens for returning user groups.
- **August 15 – September 15:** Application window opens for new user groups.
- **By September 20:** Allocation decisions finalized and communicated to all applicants.

Spring/Summer Season (Pool, Fields, Batting Cages & Summer Programs: April – August)

- **March 15 – May 15: Application window opens for returning user groups.**
- **May 15-31:** Application window opens for new user groups.
- **By June 7:** Allocation decisions finalized and communicated to all applicants.

Late/Ad-Hoc Requests

- Requests received outside the seasonal process will be considered if facility time is available.
- Priority will still follow the tiered system (recreation-first).