VIRGINIA BEACH
PARKS AND RECREATION

FIELD ALLOCATION
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Experience the Fun!
Virginia Beach Parks and Recreation

REVISED JANUARY 2014
I. Summary
The purpose of this policy is to:
- Outline allocation procedures for the permitted use of athletic fields in the City of Virginia Beach
- Ensure that fields are used for recreational functions that meet the needs of the community
- Set clear policies, rules, and regulations for field use by community-based youth sports leagues

Due to the limited number of available facilities, the Department of Parks and Recreation has established criteria for field use and will monitor proper use of allocations and permits. Increased demand on fields creates an increased strain on the City's financial resources. Therefore, the City may charge fees in order to recover public costs to operate, maintain, repair, improve, supervise, and administer the use of athletic fields.

Virginia Beach Elementary Schools and municipal parks that have athletic field space are available for use. Parks and Recreation reserves the right to make any decisions regarding sports programming and facilities that are in its best interests, and the best interests of the residents of the City.

II. Tiers of Service
Community youth sports leagues will be placed into the following tiers, prioritizing use:

Tier 1 – Recreational City-Sponsored
- Includes all use scheduled by the Virginia Beach Parks and Recreation City-Wide Athletics Office, and all use scheduled by the 14 city co-sponsored Community Recreation Associations.
- Tier 1 will not pay a fee for use of fields or use of lights.

Tier 2 – Recreational Non-City Sponsored
- Includes recreational leagues not co-sponsored by the city, but still serving a specific geographic area of the city
- Must field a minimum of 10 organized teams with established team rosters
- Registration is open regardless of skill level or ability to pay, no one is turned away, there is a no-cut policy, and everyone plays
- Examples: Little Leagues, Pony Leagues, Recreational Soccer, Recreational Lacrosse, etc.
- Tier 2 will not pay a fee for use of fields, but will pay a fee for use of lights.

Tier 3 – Advanced/Elite
- Includes leagues offering above-recreation level play, serving an area larger than one neighborhood, and/or competing for state/region/national/world championships.
- Also includes individual independent teams that participate in tournaments only (not leagues).
- Examples: Pop Warner Football, AYF (American Youth Football), UYFL (United Youth Football League), NFL Flag, Advanced Soccer, Advanced Lacrosse, Travel Softball, AAU Baseball, Select/Travel Soccer, Select/Travel Lacrosse, for-profit organizations, camps, clinics, etc.
- Tier 3 will pay a fee for all use of fields and lights. Please refer to the Field Rental Policies and Procedures available at www.vbgov/com/PAAC.
III. Eligibility Requirements

In order to be recognized by Parks and Recreation and eligible for field allocation, community youth sports leagues must meet all of the following criteria (and provide appropriate documentation):

1. Be recognized as a nonprofit by the Commonwealth of Virginia, receive a tax exemption from the Internal Revenue Service under Section 501(c)(3), and provide IRS EIN number

2. Have an established, all-volunteer Board of Directors, and provide a list of board members

3. Provide a single point of contact (name, mailing address, phone number, and e-mail address) for all field use – preferably the Area Chairman or League President – that will verify all rules and regulations concerning field use are distributed to and clearly understood by all teams/coaches

4. Provide maps showing approved boundaries of specific geographic area/neighborhood served (Tiers 1 and 2 only)

5. Provide a copy of the organization’s Mandatory Play rules (if applicable)

6. Demonstrate it is financially solvent by submitting an annual budget and financial statement(s) summarizing the previous year's financial activity

7. Provide a copy of the organization’s Constitution, Bylaws, and player/parent/coach Code of Conduct

8. Ensure that one coach per team has completed a formal coach's training via the certification process of the National Youth Sports Coaches Association (NYSCA) or other nationally recognized agency (provide documentation of coaches trained and provider of training)

9. Ensure that national background checks are completed every three years on all coaches, officers, and board members (provide documentation stating background check process and provider, along with disqualifiers)

10. Ensure that all coaches have completed Child Abuse Mandated Reporter training (provide verification including process and provider of training)

11. Provide practice and game schedules for all teams in all age groups for previous season or year (organized by location, day, time, and team)

12. Provide a copy of the organization’s player concussion policy, and documentation that coaches have completed a concussion training program

13. (Tier 1 and Tier 2) Provide proof of liability insurance in an amount no less than $500,000 per occurrence, with the City of Virginia Beach and Virginia Beach City Public Schools named as additionally insured (Tier 3 requirements are listed in the Field Rental Policies and Procedures)

14. Provide a listing of all teams and players by sport and age group, with addresses of residence, showing that a minimum of 80% of all registered players are Virginia Beach residents

15. Attendance by one board member, officer or designee at the annual field allocation meeting
IV. Allocation Process
The allocation of fields will follow the guidelines stated below:

1. All recognized sports organizations will be contacted by the City-Wide Athletic Office in December (spring season) and May (fall season). An organization must first be recognized by meeting the Eligibility Requirements in Section III and providing appropriate documentation.

2. Organizations will submit their specific requests for field use, including dates/times/locations in writing, to be received no later than January 15 (spring season) and June 15 (fall season).

3. Requests for additional use, programs or facilities not covered by the Field Allocation Policy should be submitted with the organization’s original request. Additional fees may apply.

4. After the specified deadline to receive requests, Athletic staff will begin the process of assigning fields, dates and times to the various organizations based on the priorities in this policy.

5. Fields will be allocated in a fair and equitable manner, and in the best interest of the City. Allocations will be conducted using a consistent set of criteria including but not limited to:
   A. All groups will be assigned a Tier of Service as outlined on Page 2.
   B. Space/time will be allocated using the Sports Participation Guidelines on Page 5.
   C. Traditional sports seasons have priority:
      - Spring (March 1 through July 31) – baseball, softball, soccer, lacrosse.
      - Fall (August 1 through November 30) – football.
      - Requests for out-of-season play will be reviewed after allocations for traditional season sports. Additional charges may apply for out-of-season allocations.
   D. No elementary school field will be allocated before 4pm (Monday through Friday).
   E. It may not be possible to grant all requests.
   F. No field use is assigned during the Winter months (December, January and February), as these are designated field recovery periods. Any approved field use during this time will incur rental fees and other charges.
   G. Past history, previous allocation/use of fields, timely payments, prompt return of requests for information, and compliance with established Conditions of Use, will be taken into consideration.
   H. Per the joint Facility Use and Maintenance Agreement, Virginia Beach City Public Schools (VBCPS) events have first priority on all school fields.
   I. Parks and Recreation reserves the right to cancel an allocation to accommodate the needs of any VBCPS or City-sponsored event.

6. Once the allocation process is completed, a meeting will be held with all organizations to distribute Authorization for Field Use documents and address any other concerns.

7. Organizations must submit complete practice schedules to the City-Wide Athletic Office at least 10 days prior to the first scheduled practice. Organizations that do not submit schedules will not be allowed to begin practice.
8. Game schedules must be submitted to the City-Wide Athletic Office at least 10 days before the first scheduled game.

9. Assigned field use may be verified by Athletic staff. If an allocated field(s) is not used three times by the designated organization, Parks and Recreation reserves the right to reassign and adjust field allocations accordingly. Organizations will be notified prior to reassignment.

10. Parks and Recreation reserves the right to make adjustments to the field allocation process as needed to address recognized needs or resolve conflicts.

V. Sports Participation Guidelines
For field allocation purposes and as part of a basic level of service to be provided to the community, Parks and Recreation will use the National Standards for Youth Sports. The Standards were established by the 2007 International Youth Sports Congress sponsored by the National Alliance for Youth Sports.

The standard participation guidelines below provide a level of physical activity that promotes an interest in sports and exercise, ensure equitable space/time for each team, and provide consistency between teams and associations. They also create a balance of play time with academic and/or other extracurricular activities, while still providing skill development.

1. Each age group is allocated a set number of practices and games per week. The week runs Sunday through Saturday. The following matrix indicates the maximum participation and allocation guidelines:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Practices + games per week</th>
<th>Time per session</th>
<th>Total time per team per week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.5 hours</td>
<td>6 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-18</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
<td>8 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. When school is not in session (i.e. Spring Break, Summer vacation, etc.), additional practice time may be permitted.

VI. Conditions of Field Use
Each assigned user group will be held responsible for compliance with the following policies. Misuse of a park or school field, or the failure by any user group or individual member of a user group to comply with these regulations, is cause for revocation or denial of existing permits and/or future applications.

1. **All official use of elementary school and park fields is by Authorization only.** Users without authorization, or that cannot produce their organization’s Authorization for Field Use, will be asked to vacate the premises.

2. Coaches must have a copy of their organization’s Authorization for Field Use with them at all times. The Authorization for Field Use must be available for inspection at any time at the request of City staff, Virginia Beach City Public Schools staff, school security, or police.
3. The organization's president or designated liaison is responsible for ensuring that coaches receive their organization’s Authorization for Field Use and understand the document must be on site and presentable during field use.

4. The organization's president or designated liaison is responsible to enforce the rules and regulations regarding the conduct of teams while using permitted facilities.

5. No subleasing of fields is allowed under any circumstance. Subleasing of fields will result in revocation of all permits indefinitely.

6. Any unauthorized use including using fields without a permit or interfering with another permitted user will result in the revocation of all permits indefinitely.

7. Parks and Recreation must be notified immediately if an allocated field is no longer needed, or if there is a change in the organization’s schedule.

8. Per School Board Policy 7-57: Parking at schools is permitted only in designated parking areas. Vehicles are restricted to paved roads and parking lots. Parking in grassy areas at schools and municipal parks is prohibited.

9. Smoking, use of tobacco products, drugs and alcoholic beverages are prohibited on school fields.

10. Teams must police grounds for trash daily after use.

11. The Authorization for Field Use gives approval for use of outdoor areas only. Participants are not permitted inside school buildings for any reason.

12. Times on the Authorization for Field Use marked “Exclusion” are not approved for use.

13. Multi Purpose Field users must stay at least 250 feet from home plate of Ball Diamonds.

14. Organizations are responsible for adhering to Field Maintenance Guidelines (Section VII, page 7).

15. Area Chairman/League President must submit a specific schedule (and fee, if applicable) to City-Wide Athletics for any field lights to be programmed.

16. While Spring field allocations may begin in March, fields will not be regularly maintained prior to April 1. In Fall, fields will be regularly maintained beginning August 15.

17. Replace turf divots at the end of each day to help re-root grass.

18. No tarps or material that may damage the grass may be placed on the turf.

19. Do not use fields during or after a heavy rain, or when wet or muddy.

20. Do not overcrowd fields by scheduling multiple practices or games in reserved areas. Allow a distance between fields for safe passage of spectators and participants.

21. Multi Purpose Field use, especially practices, should be conducted in such a way that the action takes place on different sections of turf, thus reducing excessive damage in one area. Rotate use, and when possible, stay off fringe or bare areas to limit erosion and further damage.

22. All vendor and food sales on City Property require prior approval from and a permit issued by Parks and Natural Areas. Additionally, all food sales and food vending operations require a valid Food Service Permit approved and issued by the Virginia Department of Health (Virginia Beach Office).
VII. Field Maintenance Guidelines
The following information will be included with each Authorization for Field Use issued, and each assigned user group will be held responsible for compliance.

1. Holes and uneven areas on ball fields may be filled/leveled with appropriate approved material. This includes batter boxes, pitching rubber areas, and any other area needing attention.

2. Fields may be groomed with appropriate method of dragging or groomer. NO vehicles except Z mower type mowers or small utility carts allowed. NO private vehicles allowed on school grounds (per School Board Policy 7-57), or on park property.

3. Working on school fields is prohibited during school operating hours.

4. All trash and debris must be removed from the field, dugout, infield, outfield, and fence areas.

5. Damages discovered to City property MUST be reported in a timely manner to Parks and Recreation, Parks and Natural Areas, and Landscape Management. This includes fences, player benches, bleachers, trash cans, or anything else needing attention.

6. Structures of any kind CANNOT be built or installed without prior approval from Parks and Recreation, Parks and Natural Areas, and Landscape Management.

7. School programs and events take priority – organizations will be notified.

8. If the City cancels a program or event due to inclement weather, it is suggested that each organization and its members refrain from using the fields.

9. Pushing/spreading water is only allowed within the infields. Do not push water into the outfield.

10. Appropriate bases and base pins may be placed as needed for that day’s events.

11. Field liner for foul lines may be applied within the infield.

12. Paint may be applied to mark the outfield lines beginning at the turf area and continuing to the outfield foul poles, fence, or designated length; whichever one comes first. Painted football and soccer field lines are allowed, if applicable.

13. All field improvements must be approved in advance by Parks and Recreation. This includes home plates, temporary fencing, fill material, etc. Stockpiling material onsite is prohibited unless pre-approved by Parks and Recreation.

14. NO chemical applications allowed. This includes all pesticides.

15. All goals must be secured to the ground or some type of pre-approved structure at all times to prevent tipping and must maintain a safe working condition.

16. User groups are responsible for excessive use or damage to City or VBCPS fields, equipment, and property. If additional maintenance is required after an activity (in excess of routine services/time), the assigned user group may be charged accordingly. Failure to pay for additional maintenance caused by excessive use or damage may result in the immediate loss of existing field allocations/permits, and/or the refusal of future allocation requests.
VIII. Inclement Weather Policy
The City reserves the right to cancel or suspend Authorization for Field Uses when field conditions could result in injury to players or cause damage to fields. Permits may also be cancelled when the health and safety of participants is threatened due to impending conditions, including but not limited to: heavy rain, poor air quality, high winds, lightning, tornadoes, tropical storms, hurricanes, or winter storms.

During inclement weather, Parks and Recreation staff will assess the playability of all City-owned and joint-use VBCPS fields to determine if use will occur. The Sports Management Coordinator or designated representative has the authority to close any/all fields. In addition, Parks and Natural Areas has the authority to close municipal park fields as needed.

With regards to evaluating playing conditions, groups should employ the playability criteria used by City staff and take into consideration the current and future quality of the turf.

Groups witnessing misuse of fields by other scheduled or unscheduled users are advised to contact Virginia Beach City-Wide Athletics at 385-0458.

IX. Violations
Violations of this policy may result in the immediate loss of existing field allocations, the revocation of existing permits, the refusal of future allocation requests, charges for the cost of any modification/repair to a field or facility related to the violation, and other actions as warranted. Parks and Recreation will provide written notice of any violation and the action taken as a result of the violation.

X. Permit Cancellation
Parks and Recreation reserves the right to cancel any Authorization for Field Use due to the following:
- Conflict with a City-sponsored or VBCPS-sponsored league, program, activity, or event
- Maintenance needs/issues
- Overuse of a field
- Unsafe conditions
- Violations of these Policies and Procedures per Section IX above

All attempts will be made to provide advance notice and reschedule at an alternate location. In the event of an emergency, or when only short or no notice can be afforded, groups must cooperate with the cancellation so as not to risk loss of privileges. The City is not obligated to provide alternate fields.

XI. Additional Supervision/Security
The City may require a field user to provide additional park personnel, security, or police protection when deemed necessary. Any resulting expenses or costs will be billed to the field user.

XII. Traffic and Parking
It is the organization’s responsibility to alleviate parking and traffic issues. The assigned user group may be requested to provide volunteers to direct participants and spectators to designated parking areas. Please note that some neighborhood streets adjacent to park property are parking by permit only.

XIII. Questions
For any questions regarding this policy, please contact City-Wide Athletics (385-0458), Parks and Natural Areas (385-0400), or Landscape Management (385-4461).

XIV. Addendum
A list of the elementary school and park fields covered by this policy can be found at www.vbgov.com/sports.