

DEPARTMENT POLICY

City of Mercer Island Parks and Recreation Department ATHLETIC FIELD USE AND RESERVATION POLICY

The City of Mercer Island Parks and Recreation Department facilitates the scheduling of all City- owned and some School District owned outdoor athletic field venues in the community for organized public use. City parks and School District properties exist to serve a wide variety of uses and priorities. City owned athletic field venues reside within multi-use community and neighborhood parks that are designed to meet a wide range of community recreation interests beyond organized athletic competition. School District owned properties primarily serve the educational needs of K-12 students during and immediately after the school day within the school year. In order to effectively and efficiently schedule these community assets to the greatest extent possible while balancing competing uses, priorities and insuring their long term sustainability, outdoor athletic field use and reservation policies are necessary.

All organized outdoor athletic field usage on City-owned property, the South Mercer Playfields, and the Mercer Island School District elementary school fields will be scheduled through the City of Mercer Island Parks and Recreation Department. Athletic field usage at the Mercer Island High School campus will be scheduled through the High School Athletic Director's office. Organized outdoor athletic field usage will refer to all athletic field use that is arranged, monitored, and/or run by an organization or its representatives for purposes of athletic fitness, conditioning, training, practice or competition.

The Mercer Island Park Code (MICC 9.30) shall govern all use of City owned parks and School District owned facilities. Mercer Island School District approved policies and approved City-School Interlocal Agreements, or their equivalent, shall supersede the Park Code in any cases of conflict. Persons convicted of a violation of any provision of the Park Code, including any rule or regulation promulgated pursuant to the authority granted by it, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

1.0 PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT POLICY GOALS

- 1.1 Maximize the use of all park venues, while preserving park assets.
- 1.2 Insure all user groups are given a chance to use parks and city athletic fields.
- 1.3 Administer a system of prioritization for field allocation that is rational and transparent.
- 1.4 Collect fees to help offset the cost of maintaining and scheduling city parks and athletic fields.
- 1.5 Protect the rights of neighbors of city parks and athletic fields.
- 1.6 Allow passive, drop-in use of fields for families, neighbors, and unorganized play.

2.0 RESERVATION POLICY GUIDELINES

- 2.1 The role of the Mercer Island Parks and Recreation Department and its Director, as the owners and operators of Mercer Island ballfields, includes final authority to create, amend, or strike policy items and final authority in field allocation.
- 2.2 Recognizing that the Mercer Island Parks and Recreation Department is a public entity with a mission to provide the public with access to quality facilities and services, recreational use of the City's athletic fields will receive priority over select or premier organizations, in general. Recreational use shall be defined as programming which is open to all interested participants, not try-out based and is focused on fitness, health and fun.
- 2.3 All City field usage will be scheduled through the Parks and Recreation Department.
- 2.4 All scheduled usage will have priority over non-scheduled usage on all park and athletic facilities.
- 2.5 Field reservation fees will be higher for adults (over 18) than youth.
- 2.6 Games being rescheduled for rainouts or make ups will have priorities over practices scheduled for the same day.
- 2.7 Unless the Parks and Recreation Department determines an earlier closure is warranted, all grass fields will be closed from the fourth week of November through the end of February.
- 2.8 Best efforts should be made by each organization to schedule their allotted field time as efficiently as possible. Mercer Island Parks and Recreation does not have a recommendation for the

number of teams to be scheduled on a particular field at one time, however, safety, field condition, age of participants, and program preference will all be factors that may be monitored by the City to encourage efficient use of fields during peak demand.

- 2.9 Baseball/softball makeup games will be rescheduled during existing scheduled practice times whenever possible.
- 2.10 Scheduling Periods: Athletic field facilities will be scheduled during four quarterly periods:
Spring (March, April, May, early- June)
Requests for this period will be accepted mid- January—see Scheduling Calendar
Summer (mid- June, July, August)
Requests for this period will be accepted mid-February—see Scheduling Calendar
Fall (Late August, September, October, November)
Requests for this period will be accepted mid-July—see Scheduling Calendar
Winter (December, January, February)
Requests for this period will be accepted mid-October—see Scheduling Calendar
- 2.11 Field User roundtable meetings will be held quarterly in order to increase communication among users and with City staff, discuss upcoming projects or maintenance impacts, and collaborate to solve scheduling conflicts or major changes to field requests. Meetings will be open to any individual or organization that utilizes Mercer Island fields.

3.0 PARK USE POLICIES

- 3.1 The Parks & Recreation Department reserves the right to close any park or field, without notice, due to safety concerns, hazards, or due to field conditions which may impact the long-term use of the park or field.
- 3.2 All 'passive' parks will not be scheduled for organized athletic activities.
- 3.3 Motor vehicles are not allowed on park facilities and are to be parked only in designated parking areas.
- 3.4 No person shall engage in the sale of any merchandise or services, or operate any concession without prior approval of the Park & Recreation Department.
- 3.5 All litter shall be deposited in the designated receptacles.
- 3.6 All organizations, groups, and /or individuals utilizing the facilities must leave them in a satisfactory condition. Failure to do so will result in the additional maintenance charges required for cleanup. Egregious or repeated failures may result in additional penalties, including loss of access to athletic fields.
- 3.7 All rules and regulations related to the use of City of Mercer Island park facilities shall also apply when using School District facilities.
- 3.8 Any organization not utilizing the parks as approved may lose the right to use the park in the future.
- 3.9 Dogs are not allowed on athletic fields during organized play. Dogs are not allowed on synthetic turf fields at any time. Dogs must be leashed and feces removed from the park area.
- 3.10 All alcohol, tobacco products and drugs are prohibited in all City parks.
- 3.11 Nails, staples, tacks or other items that would deface city property may not be used to attach to park structures and furniture.
- 3.12 Ballfields are not to be used when signed as 'Closed.'
- 3.13 The Parks and Recreation Department controls the maintenance of the outdoor athletic field complexes. Users shall not mix any unauthorized foreign material into the soil of any grass field or park.

4.0 BALLFIELD ALLOCATION POLICIES & PROCEDURES

- 4.1 All reservation requests must be made in writing to the Facility Coordinator according to the Scheduling Calendar.
- 4.2 All field users will sign and abide by the City of Mercer Island Park and Recreation Field User Code of Conduct.

- 4.3 All field reservation, service, and light fees must be paid in full at time of field use confirmation and receipt of rental contract, unless user is approved for a monthly billing plan approved by MIPR.
- 4.4 Field user organizations will designate a primary point of contact to City staff who will be responsible for requests, changes, and payment of fees.
- 4.5 Fields will be multi-use according to season due to limited inventory. Field maintenance services (such as baseball preps or soccer goals) will be guaranteed to the in-season sports only.
- 4.6 Priority will be given to in-season sports according to the following schedule:
Fall (Late August through November): Soccer & Football
Winter (December through February): Soccer (Synthetic turf only)
Spring (March through mid- June): Baseball/Softball & Lacrosse
Summer (Late June through mid-August: Baseball/Softball
- 4.7 Athletic field facilities may be split to allow for sharing of the complex between organizations. The Parks and Recreation Department will determine which fields are appropriate for use by separate organizations and will allocate accordingly.
- 4.8 Athletic field allocation priority will be as follows:
 A. Mercer Island School District & Mercer Island Parks and Recreation
 B. Tier One (listed in order of priority):
 1. Non-profit youth, recreation-based* organizations which have a minimum of 75% Mercer Island residents.
 2. Non-profit adult, recreation-based* organizations which have a minimum of 75% Mercer Island residents.
 3. Non-profit youth and adult non-recreation-based* organizations, which have a minimum of 75% Mercer Island residents
 C. Tier Two (listed in order of priority):
 1. Non-profit youth, recreation-based* organizations which have less than 75% Mercer Island residents
 2. Non-profit adult, recreation-based* organizations which have less than 75% Mercer Island residents
 D. Tier Three (listed in order of priority):
 1. For-profit youth organizations
 2. For-profit adult organizations
 **"Recreation-based" shall be defined as those organizations whose programming consists of at least 75% recreational (open enrollment, no try-out, non-competitive) teams.
- 4.9 In recognition that there are limited multi-use fields suitable for all sports, the following criteria will be used to establish fair and reliable allocation within the tiers listed above:
 A. Historic use: In order to provide a reliable baseline schedule for field users and City staff, historic use will be a factor in field allocation. Three years of consistent use will establish historical precedence
 B. Safety: Safety of participants and general park users will be taken into consideration for field allocation. Some sports are compatible to use adjacent fields or split fields, some are not (i.e. soccer and lacrosse sharing a facility). Final determination will be made by Mercer Island Parks and Recreation.
 C. Number of participants within an organization: Allocation should be generally proportional to the number of participants in an organization.
 D. Appropriate use: The City will attempt to assign earlier time slots for younger teams, smaller grass fields for the youngest participants, games on higher quality fields, etc.
 E. Field/facility condition: Fields may be closed or subject to limited availability at any time for safety concerns or due to the risk of severe damage to the field.
 F. Users in good standing: Invoices are up to date according to the payment plan, requests are received according to the scheduling calendar, and permit conditions are consistently met.
- 4.10 Field prep requests for baseball or softball games must be made at least five (5) working days prior to requested date. Field lining and goals for soccer or lacrosse must be requested at least two weeks in advance.

- 4.11 All field prep work (field preps, lights, etc.) will be billed for unless the City cancels the scheduled event or closes the facility due to weather or unsafe conditions.
- 4.12 Organizations will turn back unneeded field time promptly for reallocation to other users. An automatic penalty fee of 50% will be incurred for returning large blocks of time or an excessive number of dates after league game schedules have been established. The City will communicate first to other in-season organizations via email when and if fields have been turned back and are available for use; communication will include a deadline for booking these open fields. After that time, out of season users will have the opportunity to book anything open. Organizations which are found by the Parks and Recreation Department to consistently fail to utilize field space they have reserved risk losing historical precedence status at that facility for the following season.

5.0 FACILITY USE PERMIT CONDITIONS

- 5.1 Whoever signs the Field Rental Contract is the authorized representative and is responsible for the conduct of the group/organization and financial reimbursement if damage is done
- 5.2 Failure to follow City laws and park rules could result in citation, fines and exclusion from future park use
- 5.3 Any organization not utilizing the parks as scheduled may lost the right to use the park in the future.
- 5.4 Groups using the fields on three or more occurrences for practices or games are required to provide, at their own expense, a comprehensive general liability insurance policy naming the City of Mercer Island as an additional insured and an endorsement form. This policy shall be primary and written with the limits of \$1,000,000 combined single limits per occurrence.
- 5.5 Cancellation/Refund Policy:
Five (5) business days or more before reservation date: Full refund (less \$10 administration fee)
Less than 5 days' notice: Will not be charged for lights/preps, no refund for field fees.