



<b>POLICY TITLE: Recreation and School Space Priority and Permitting</b>		
<b>Policy Number: 06.001</b>	<b>Review Cycle: Yearly</b>	<b>Effective Date: 1/1/2024</b> <b>Modified: June 23, 2024</b>
<b>Reviewer: Chief of Recreation Services</b>		<b>Approval Authority: Deputy Director</b>

**SCOPE:**

This policy applies to all Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks staff and the public that submits permit requests for BCRP owned and operated recreation facilities and Baltimore County Public School (BCPS) sites.

**POLICY STATEMENT:**

Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks seeks to maximize the recreation opportunities that are available for all users in Baltimore County. The permit priority guidelines for community parks/Baltimore County Public School sites, and regional parks should work in collaboration to achieve this goal.

**Organized vs Unorganized**

- All organized recreation activities require a BCRP issued permit for recreational use.
- An Activity will be considered organized if it is observed to be playing at a regular day/time/location and it contains one of the following:
  - Coaches/Volunteers
  - Referees
  - Uniforms
  - Significant number of spectators in relation to the number of participants
- Groups that are observed to be playing at a regular day/time/location without the presence of coaches, referees, uniforms, or spectators will be considered an unorganized activity. An unorganized activity must leave the field if a permitted group shows up to play during their permitted time(s). Participants of an unorganized activity will be asked to complete a general Recreation and Parks participation waiver which acknowledges the park rules and risk of playing at County facilities.

## **Order of Priority**

### **Community Sites and BCPS Order of Priority**

- 1. Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks**
- 2. Certified Recreation Councils**
  - (1) Youth Recreation/In-House level Program from Local Recreation Council
  - (2) Youth Travel/Club Program from Local Recreation Council
  - (3) Adult Program from Local Recreation Council
  - (4) Youth Recreation/In-House level from other Recreation Council
  - (5) Youth Travel/Club from other Recreation Council
  - (6) Adult Program from other Recreation Council
- 3. BCPS**
- 4. Outside Non-Profit**
  - i) Youth
  - ii) Adult
- 5. For-Profit**
  - i) Youth
  - ii) Adult

### **Regional Park Fields Order of Priority**

- 1. Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks Programs and Events.**
  - i) BCRP Approved Tournaments & Special Events may be scheduled up to a year out.
  - ii) BCRP led Inter-council youth leagues.
- 2. Certified Recreation Councils**
  - (1) Youth Recreation/In-House level Program from Local Recreation Council
  - (2) Youth Travel/Club Program from Local Recreation Council
  - (3) Adult Program from Local Recreation Council
  - (4) Youth Recreation/In-House level from other Recreation Council
  - (5) Youth Travel/Club from other Recreation Council
  - (6) Adult Program from other Recreation Council
- 3. BCPS**
- 4. Outside Non-Profit**
  - i) Youth
  - ii) Adult
- 5. For-Profit**
  - i) Youth
  - ii) Adult

## **Definitions**

“Certified Recreation Council” means a 501c3 non-profit organization recognized by the Baltimore County Board of Recreation and Parks as meeting their criteria established by the Board as part of the bi-annual certification process. Additionally, to be certified Recreation Councils will need to have a signed approved Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks.

“Recognition” means the process established within the By-Laws of the Baltimore County Board of Recreation and Parks to approved Recreation Councils and the MOU process by the Department of Recreation and Parks.

“Recreation program” means a program recognized by a certified recreation council as operating:

- A) solely as a seasonal and/or full year program of a single certified council; and
- B) with all funds collected and disbursed by the program controlled and governed by the certified recreation council’s adopted By-Laws, policies, or procedures; and
- C) with all registrants having an opportunity to participate in the program regardless of skill level; and
- D) with the program leadership actively involved in the affairs of the council, as defined by the By-Laws, policies, or procedures of the council.

“Recreation Programs” include, but are not limited to:

- A. In-house leagues operated by one single Council;
- B. Interscholastic middle school sports teams or programs;
- C. Inter-council sports teams or programs wherein any single council has an insufficient number of registrants to provide a viable intra-council program;
- D. Clinic instructional short-term programs (Learn to play style programs etc.)

“Recreation Council Travel/Club Program” means a program:

- A. that does not offer guaranteed participation regardless of skill level within the program; and
- B. can operate as a seasonal and/or full year program of a **single certified council**; and
- C. with all funds collected and disbursed by the program controlled and governed by the certified recreation council’s adopted By-Laws, policies, or procedures; and
- D. with the program leadership actively involved in the affairs of the council, as defined by the By-Laws, policies, or procedures of the council; and
- E. program costs are affordable as determined by the Department; and
- F. coaches/administrators are mostly volunteers and/or participation is mainly comprised of local/surrounding area participants.

*In the event above criteria are not met, the Department reserves the right to charge appropriate fees for facility access in line with an Outside Club/Travel Program.*

“Outside Club/Travel Program” means a program:

- A. that does not offer guaranteed participation regardless of skill level within the program; and
- B. that itself or its parent/affiliate organization has a non-profit, not for profit, for profit or corporate status **separate from a certified recreation council**; or, that deposits any revenue in a financial institution or makes disbursements from said account which is not under the control of a recreation council or the federal TIN on the account is assigned to an entity different from the recreation council; and
- C. program costs are unaffordable as determined by the Department; and
- D. coaches/administrators are not mostly volunteers and/or participation is mainly comprised of local/surrounding area participants.

**Recreation Facilities and BCPS Permitting Seasons:**

- Spring: March 1 - Mid June
- Summer: Mid-June – July (Not a charged Season for Council Travel/Club)
- Fall: August 1 -Mid November
- Winter: Mid November - February

### Seasonal Permit Request Timeline:

Season	Spring (March 1- Mid June)	Summer (Mid-June - July)	Fall (Aug 1- Mid Nov)	Winter (Mid Nov - Feb)
BCRP	Dec 1	March 1	May 1	Sept 1
Council Recreation/In -House Level	Dec 1 – Dec 15	March 1 – March 15	May 1 - May 15	Sept 1 – Sept 15
Council Travel/Club/ Adult	Dec 16 – Jan 1	March 16 - April 1	May 16 - June 1	Sept 16 - Oct 1
BCPS	Jan 1 - Jan 15	April 1 - April 15	June 1 - June 15	Oct 1 - Oct 15
General Public	Feb 1	May 1	July 1	Nov 1

### Missed submittal deadlines:

If you miss the deadline to submit a request for your priority group, your request will then be considered within the next priority level. The request will not be given its normal priority consideration. Requests for fields/spaces may overlap one month into the following season. Any other overlap requests outside of the season request window will not be considered and must be resubmitted to the department/community office during the appropriate request window.

You cannot submit a request prior to the request window for the season beginning.

Programs that do not conform to the above schedule, or need to be scheduled further in advance, must contact appropriate Department Office for discussion.

\*School Year Childcare Programs submit during the fall for the entire school year (only council-based programs).

### Release Dates for Unneeded Space/Field Time

To ensure as many groups as possible have access to facility time, groups should release any unneeded facility time as soon as their schedules are set. Users will not be charged for the facility rental time minus the non-refundable application fee, if the date/time(s) are returned to BCRP prior to the start of the general public request window. All returns must be submitted in writing.

All user groups are subject to submitting a non-refundable application fee per facility (per room or field), per season, expect for BCPS Groups.

BCRP will issue permits to **outside groups** only after **all fees have been paid in full**. These fees are subject to change without notice.

**Certified Councils** will be subject to the associated fees as identified in the BCRP Approved Fee Chart however they will receive their permits prior to the collection of appropriate fees. **Appropriate fees will be collected during the season.** Failure to pay associated fees may impact future permits for Certified Councils.

## **Blanket Permitting**

Blanket permitting is not authorized. Permit time should be requested only for time actually needed by the program. Effort should be taken by requester to only request time anticipated to be used. Requests should not be submitted for facilities to be “on hold” or for “back up status.

## **Unused Space/Field Time**

BCRP Staff will perform regular checks of facilities that are permitted for use. In the event that a program is not using assigned time BCRP will contact using group to confirm permitted time is still needed. Repeated instances of programs not utilizing assigned time may result in revocation of existing permits and impact future permit requests.

## **Cancellations and Refunds**

Athletic fields and courts

Only Field time cancelled by Recreation and Park staff due to inclement weather or other reasons is eligible for a refund, account credit, or rescheduling. The refund will be processed after the day of the event. Unless requested by the user, all refunds will be returned as account credits which can be used for future permits/rentals.

## **General Guidelines for Field Use**

All applicants must be 21 years and older. All field users are expected to adhere to the following guidelines to help keep fields in an acceptable condition for public use. Violation of these guidelines may result in fines or the loss of future permitting or use privileges:

- All unlit fields must be vacated by dark.
- A printed or digital copy of the permit must be on site in the possession of the permitted group or individual during the scheduled time. (A game schedule or a photocopy of the permit will serve as a permit for the Department of Recreation or leagues once verified by Park staff.)
- The permit is for the sole use of the organization named on the permit contract and is not transferable.
- Loud music, bands, or excessive noise which disturbs the peace are prohibited.
- Permit holders are required to see that players and spectators adhere to all park regulations, including:
  - No beer or alcohol allowed nor the use of illegal drugs
  - No urinating or changing clothes in public
  - No loud noises permitted (amplified music, horns, car alarms)
  - No littering. All trash must be picked up during and after field use and placed in the nearest receptacle or carried away for proper disposal. All recyclables must be picked up and placed in the nearest recycling receptacle or carried away for proper disposal
  - Removal or repositioning of goals installed by authorized BCRP staff or contractors on park fields is not allowed
  - The use of smoking products is not permitted on the benches, playing areas, and those areas in proximity to the playing field (this includes cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco, and snuff);

- No selling of food, beverages or merchandise on park property without an approved concession permit
- Carpooling is encouraged, and parking is allowed in designated parking areas only
- No Parking nor driving on the field
- All Pets must be leashed at all times
- Solicitation of any business, trade or occupation is strictly prohibited unless authorized by permit.
- Use of a natural grass athletic field is prohibited when:
  - It is closed for renovation or repair;
  - Water is standing on the field;
  - Soil is frozen;
  - The soil is wet and "spongy";
- Use of a turf athletic field is prohibited when:
  - It is closed for renovation or repair
  - Inclement Weather Policy dictates closure
  - The field is deemed unplayable by Recreation and Park staff.
  - Closed due to weather conditions.
  - A lightning/electrical storm is occurring;
- The field is deemed unplayable by Recreation and Park staff.
- Field users may contact the BCRP inclement weather line at 410-88-Parks to determine whether a field is open for play. Users can also sign up to receive electronic field notification alerts via text messages or emails through the County's CivicRec system.

This policy updates and replaces Directive C-1 (priority use of Recreation Facilities) and the Regional Park Facility Request Procedure.

**REFERENCES:**

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- Comprehensive Revenue Policy

**REVISIONS:**

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Revised	December 19, 2023
Revised	June 23, 2024