



Athletic Field Use Policy

I. Purpose

This document establishes the policies and procedures that determine the allocation and use of the Stratford Recreation Department governed athletic and community fields with the goal of fair and equitable distribution among all users. Specifically, the policy outlines who is eligible to receive a permit for use of Stratford public athletic fields and the process used to allocate and schedule fields for athletic leagues/organizations, individuals, groups, and corporate applicants.

Two governing ideas formed the basis for the development of the policy;

- a. The rules for scheduling enable the largest number of town residents to have access to public athletic fields.
- b. The field scheduling process is designed to maximize use of available resources in a fair and equitable manner.

II. Scope of Authority

The Stratford Recreation Department, in cooperation with the Stratford Parks & Recreation Committee shall implement this policy, comply with regulations and provide equal access to courts and fields to the best of their ability.

The Stratford Recreation Department has the authority to; make changes to the field allocation guidelines, season dates, primary/secondary sport designations, practice/game allocations, fee charges as usage and field availability change, and to interpret and determine appropriate procedures for implementation of the policy. Additionally, the Stratford Recreation Department has the authority to deny or terminate the use of a field to any person, group, or organization at any time, for any reason, and/or to impose a penalty for not complying with this policy and its rules and regulations.

III. Limitations on Facility Use

- a. Subleasing fields is not allowed under any circumstances.
 - i. Penalty for subleasing: Permit revoked immediately
 - ii. To receive a permit for the following season: a league representative must appear before the Stratford Parks and Recreation Committee
- b. Hours of Stratford Recreation facilities shall be defined as;
 - i. Each day from dawn until dusk at unlit facilities and from 4:30 PM to 10:00 PM for lighted fields provided the field is open for use.
- c. Use of Stratford athletic and community fields by organizations and individuals can only be permitted during those periods designated for community use and for those activities which the Stratford Recreation Department is responsible for scheduling.
- d. A request for a particular athletic or community field does not guarantee availability or assignment of that field to the requestor. Fields are assigned at the discretion of the Stratford Recreation Department to maximize overall field utilization

- e. Fields taken out of service for renovation or maintenance by the Recreation Department, Parks & Recreation Committee, Department of Public Works, or Board of Education will not be permitted for use.
- f. Assigned facilities shall only be used for the activities for which they were approved by the Recreation Department and may not be reallocated to another entity by the original permit holder.

..

IV. Organization / Program User Groups and Certification

All organizations are placed in one of seven (7) user groups based upon the information submitted within their request. All group definitions will be determined and approved by the Recreation Department.

V. Group Definitions and Prioritization of Field Availability

Group:	Description:	Examples:	Participant Requirement:
1.	Stratford Public Schools Interscholastic Programs		19 years and younger
2	Stratford Recreation Administered Programs		Varies by program
3	Certified Non-Profit Resident Youth Organizations / Programs		19 years and younger and 95-100% residency
4	Resident Youth Travel Teams		19 years and younger and 95-100% residency
5	Resident Adult Teams		19 years and Older 85-100% residency
6	Corporate Partner	Any property tax paying company with facilities within the physical borders of the town of Stratford	No age or residency requirements
7	Other	Any organization or program not meeting a Group 1-6 criteria	No age or residency requirements

VI. Fee Structure

Group:	Turf	Grass	Baseball	Little League/ Softball	Tennis/ Bball Courts	Lights
1	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
3	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
4	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
5	\$75/hour	\$25/hour	\$25/hour	\$75/hour	\$25/hour	\$25/hour
6	\$75/hour	\$25/hour	\$25/hour	\$75/hour	\$25/hour	\$25/hour
7	\$125/hour	\$75/hour	\$100/hour	\$125/hour	\$50/hour	\$25/hour

- a. Additional costs will apply for all clinics, tournaments, special events and other activities scheduled outside of originally agreed upon season of play.
- b. Fee collections for organizations are due at time of permit approval.
- c. Fees for Groups 5 through 7 are due at time of permit approval.
- d. Cancellation of permit will apply if payment is not received prior to permit date.
- e. Each organization will be billed for monthly use of Port-a-johns on site
 - i. \$22 for 1-10 days, \$45 11-20 days, \$66 21-31 days

VII. Contact Information

If questions arise regarding the scheduling, use, or maintenance of any property within the Stratford Parks & Recreation system please contact the Stratford Recreation Department. For assistance outside of normal business hours please contact Public Works.

Stratford Recreation Main Office

(203) 385-4052

Mon.-Fri. 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM (closed Federal Holidays)

Public Works

(203) 385-4080

VIII. General Guidelines & Procedures for Obtaining Facility Use Permits

- a. Field use permits are allocated each season; Fall, Winter, Spring, Summer.
- b. The designated user group’s representative that is listed on the “Athletic Field Use of Town Property Permit” will be the only individual allowed to book field times for their group/organization.
- c. Fields will be allocated and permitted as sustainability allows. The following requirements will influence the way in which field allocations will be conducted:
 - 1. Fields will be allocated by priority use (see section V).
 - 2. If two or more user groups fall equally within the same tier-group priority classification, the Stratford Recreation Department will consider the following factors in assigning specific fields including the synthetic turf:

- i. The number of Stratford residents served; preference given to greater number served.
 - ii. Total amount of field hours requested as it pertains to available fields.
 - iii. Within each tier, games will take priority over practice
- d. Teams/organizations will be required to provide insurance coverage in the amount of \$1million dollars naming the Town of Stratford as an additional insured.
- e. Teams/organizations will be required to give Stratford Recreation access to all online schedules/websites accessible to players/participants.
- f. Teams/organizations need to notify the Stratford Recreation department if a field will not be used. Those who fail to utilize the fields assigned to them three (3) times within a season will forfeit their remaining scheduled field times.
- g. Requests for additional use of fields, after the "Field Allocation" process has been finalized, will be on a first-come, first-served basis.
- h. All organizations hosting tournaments, clinics or special events outside of their "Athletic Field Use of Town Property Permit" are required to meet with the Stratford Recreation and Parks Department a minimum of ninety (90) days before the event date
- i. Once all "Athletic Field Use of Town Property Request" requirements are met, a formal permit will be issued authorizing use of fields.
- j. The Stratford Recreation Department reserves the exclusive right to reassign field assignments to accommodate the needs for high school sports and rain outs or cancelled games and/or special events.
- k. All field preparation requests must be submitted and paid for by user group/organization when the reservation is made.
- l. The Stratford Recreation Department may conduct unannounced field visits to ensure that all organizations are in compliance with all requirements.
- m. Any group/organization that fails to pay their facility usage/port-a-john balance will not be permitted to apply for further usage of any grounds or facilities until balance is paid in full.
- n. Maintenance of facilities, field preparation needs, and special requests must be submitted in advance in writing to the Stratford Recreation Department who will coordinate scheduling with the Parks Division.
- o. All groups/organizations must comply with weather policies and regulations as set by the Stratford Recreation and Parks Departments
- p. Any groups/organizations using facilities will be responsible for providing proper supervision during use.
- q. The permit holder will leave the field in a clean and neat condition. If it is necessary for the town to provide cleaning services following the reserved activity, the permit holder will be charged an hourly fee.

IX. Violations

Any user/group who obtains field time through the Stratford Department and violates the guidelines and/or regulations stated in this policy or engages in behavior otherwise deemed detrimental by the Stratford Recreation Department, will be subject to the following disciplinary action schedule:

- a. **1st Violation:** A written warning to the permit holder who shall then disseminate the message to the appropriate coaches and/or parents.
- b. **2nd Violation:** Temporary suspension and/or fine at the discretion of Stratford Recreation Department.
- c. **3rd Violation:** Team or organization shall forfeit field usage for the remainder of the season. A representative from the suspended organization must then come before the Stratford Parks and Recreation Committee.

X. Field Use Rules

- a. Athletic and community fields are available for reservation and use through the Stratford Recreation Department. Permits may be obtained by going online and filling out a Use of Town Property Request. <https://townofstratford.recdesk.com>
- b. Town of Stratford Ordinances must be adhered to at all times.
- c. The permit holder is the responsible party (18 years of age or older).
- d. No amplified music including bands and DJs without a permit. The use of excessively loud music is prohibited. Permit holders must adhere to the Town of Stratford Noise Control Ordinance at all times.
- e. The destruction or alteration of any town property is prohibited. Decorations may be attached to the structures with tape only. NO NAILS OR TACKS. All decorations and tape must be removed at the conclusion of the event.
- f. Permit holder is responsible for trash collection and removal. The Stratford Recreation Department adheres to a "Carry-In, Carry-Out" policy. ALL TRASH generated by the event must be removed from the site by the permit holder. The Town of Stratford reserves the right to bill the permit holder for any clean-up costs related to the event.
- g. Alcoholic beverages are strictly prohibited in both play and spectator areas. Glass containers of any kind are prohibited.
- h. The use of tobacco products or electronic nicotine delivery devices is prohibited. The use or possession of drugs is strictly prohibited at all times.
- i. The reservation is for the sports field(s) and lights; fields are permitted "as is". Bases and other equipment are not included in the permit. Field use is limited to the activity specified on the permits.
- j. No apparatus or equipment may be located on the sports fields unless the use and location of equipment has received prior approval by the Stratford Recreation Department. Equipment may not be relocated without prior approval from Stratford Recreation Department.
- k. No animals are allowed on the courts or fields at any time.
- l. No vendors allowed on premises without express written approval from the Stratford Department.
- m. No fires and/or outdoor cooking will be allowed except by permit from the

Stratford Recreation and Health Department.

- n. All vehicles must park in designated vehicle parking spaces.
- o. In case of rain or inclement weather conditions, permit holders must check with the Stratford Recreation department and check email in order to be notified of field closures or changes.
- p. Once a determination has been made to close a facility, no user group or individual will for any reason override that decision or take any corrective measures to any type of field in an attempt to make it playable.
- q. If damages are incurred on a closed field, the responsible party will be assessed the full cost of repairs to be determined by the Stratford Parks Department or designee.
- r. Athletic field lights will be turned on and off by the Stratford Parks Department, or designee. In the event of a problem, contact the Stratford Recreation or Public Works Departments.
- s. Cancellations must be made to the Stratford Recreation Department.
- t. To preserve turf quality and provide a clean, healthy and safe environment, some items are PROHIBITED on synthetic turf fields. Items include, but are not limited to:
 - i. Chairs, Fireworks, Food of any kind, gum, sunflower seeds, Glass of any kind, Metal cleats, Motorized and non-motorized vehicles, Spectators, Tables, Tents, Pets
- u. Unless specifically stated on the permit, it is understood that the gathering to be held is not a fundraiser, no admission is to be charged, no tickets will be sold or collections taken, and that no items or services will be sold.
- v. Groups conducting fundraising events must state this in the online request to the Stratford Recreation Department.
- w. User agrees to indemnify, defend, and save harmless the Town of Stratford, its agents, officers, employees, and representatives from and against any accident, injury, illness, including death, and/or loss of property, or damage to neighboring property.
- x. Permit holder must comply with instructions given by the Stratford Recreation and Parks Department. Failure to comply with instructions, park regulations or engaging in behavior otherwise deemed detrimental may forfeit the right to use town facilities in the future. Permits are revocable at any time for violation of rule, ordinance or state law.
- y. The Stratford Recreation Department reserves the right to change these rules at any time.

XI. Grievances

Any person who feels they have a grievance against the Stratford Recreation or Parks Department for these procedures, policies and guidelines must submit a written letter to the Director of Public Works.