



RECREATION FIELD & FACILITIES USE POLICY POLICY NO. 42

SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION

The Town of Hopkinton provides fields and facilities for the use and enjoyment of residents of Hopkinton. The fields and facilities have been developed over the years through the work of Town staff supported by tax dollars, many hours of volunteer labor, and generous donations from those that use and care for, and about, the fields and facilities.

SECTION 2. PURPOSE

This policy shall serve as the guidelines concerning the scheduling and use of Town fields and facilities. The purpose of this policy is:

- To ensure that the use of available Town of Hopkinton recreation fields is allocated in a manner that is fair and equitable.
- To ensure that all users of the Town recreation fields understand the rules pertaining to their use of the facilities.
- To ensure that all users of the Town recreation fields exercise good judgment in the use and care of the facilities.
- To ensure that users of the Town fields and Town staff understand their responsibilities with respect to the use and management of Town facilities.

SECTION 3. AUTHORITY

This policy is adopted by the Select Board in accordance with NH RSA 31:39 as it relates to the Board's management of the Town's facilities.

SECTION 4. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- Adult Town Team/League - adult sports organization in which at least 80% of players are residents or employed in Hopkinton.
- Competition Team – a selective competitive team (youth or adult) with at least 50% of players being residents of Hopkinton (e.g., AAU)
- Concessionaire – any person or entity offering for sale any product or service at any Town field/facility.
- Department – Town of Hopkinton Recreation Department
- Director – Town of Hopkinton Recreation Director or Designee
- Field – any type of athletic field, including but not limited to, baseball, field hockey, lacrosse, soccer, and softball.
- Facility – Any Town recreational park, structure, or area

- Non-Town Team or League – an adult and/or youth team or league that does not meet the residency requirement.
- Organization – a formally organized and recognized entity that sponsors recreational activities.
- Superintendent – Town of Hopkinton Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds or Designee
- Town – Town of Hopkinton
- User – any individual person or group who uses a Town field/facility.
- Youth Town Team/League – youth sports organization that at least 90% of players are residents of Hopkinton.

SECTION 5. GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

- A. The Director is responsible for scheduling and assignment of all facilities with the exception of George Park, which is scheduled in conjunction with the Hopkinton School District Athletic Director during the spring and fall seasons.
- B. Organizations and individuals requesting use of Town field/facilities must follow the application procedures outlined in Section 7.
- C. Public use of the fields/facilities may be restricted as deemed necessary by the Superintendent to preserve or protect the property or in the interest of the health, safety, and welfare of the general public.
- D. Restroom facilities are available for public use, weather permitting (generally April 1 through October 15). Any additional needs of portable facilities will be at the user's expense with prior approval of the Superintendent.
- E. Any damage to Town fields/facilities must be reported promptly to the Superintendent.
- F. No vehicles of any type are permitted on Town fields except in designated parking areas.
- G. Items of personal property found at Town fields/facilities will be removed. The Town shall not be responsible for any property left on or at the field/facility.
- H. There is to be no alcohol permitted on Town property unless an alcohol permit has been filed and approved by the Town and State.
- I. Smoking is not permitted on Town fields.
- J. If available, use of lights must be requested and approved in advance of use. Fees will be charged to offset the costs of electricity.

SECTION 6. USE GUIDELINES

- A. Personal/Individual Field Use: Individual residents desiring to use Town fields may do

so at their leisure, provided that another party has not previously scheduled the fields. There is no charge for the use of fields. Individuals may contact the Department to check the availability of a field. Personal/Individual use is not the same as group use. Hopkinton organizations using space on town property must file a field use application.

- B. Town Sports Teams/Leagues & Hopkinton Non-Profit Groups: Town organizations desiring to use Town fields/facilities may do so with prior scheduling approval from the Director. The Director shall develop a schedule that will be made publicly available. Requests for field use are considered on a first-come, first-served basis balancing the needs of all groups, taking into consideration the adverse impact on current programming/events, evaluating field space availability, and considering any other relevant factors. No fees will be charged to these groups for the use of Town field/facilities. Security deposits will not be required for fall and spring sports for Hopkinton teams.

Town Teams and Leagues are required to have General Liability insurance naming the Town as an additional insured.

- C. Non-Town Sports Teams/Leagues & All For-Profit Groups: Non-Town organization and any for-profit groups desiring to use Town fields may do so with prior scheduling approval from the Director. Requests for field use are considered on an individual basis and only after all Town groups have been scheduled. Requests will be reviewed and take into consideration the adverse impact on current programming/events, field availability as well as any other relevant factors.

Non-Town Teams and Leagues are required to have General Liability insurance naming the Town as an additional insured.

SECTION 7. FIELD/FACILITY REQUEST & ASSIGNMENT PROCESS

- A. Priority of Field/Facility Assignments: The priority arrangement for the scheduling of Town fields/facilities is as follows:
1. Town and School Activities
 2. Youth Town Leagues/Teams
 3. Adult Town Leagues/Teams
 4. Individual residents and/or Town Organizations (non-profit)
 5. Competition Teams
 6. Non-Town Youth Leagues/Teams
 7. Non-Town Adult Leagues/Teams
 8. Other Organizations (non-Town and all for-profit)

Following the priority above, in-season sports will have precedence over out-of-season sports.

- B. Field/Facility Use Request Application: To request field/facility use, organizations, groups, and individuals must complete and submit a Field/Facility Use Request Application to the Department.

Use of the Fields/Facilities generally will not be scheduled between December 1 and March 31.

Upon receipt of the completed application and required documentation, the team/league will receive confirmation in writing of the groups' assigned fields and scheduled dates and times for usage.

Organizations or users shall notify the Director of the cancellation of any scheduled field/facility use at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled use.

- C. Good Standing: Teams and Leagues requesting field use must not only complete a Field/Facility Use Application, but also be in "good standing" with the Town for consideration. Good standing includes, but is not limited to the following:
- No outstanding monies owed to the Town.
 - Current copy of League's Code of Conduct for players, coaches, and parents, as approved by the Director, on file with the Department.
 - Current Certificate of Insurance naming the Town as an additional insured on file with the Department (*See Section 8*)
 - Has not been in violation of the field use policy previously; or if so, has sufficiently corrected violations per the Superintendent's request.
- D. Tournaments, Camps & Special Events: All requests for tournaments, camps and special events must be submitted separately. These requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Director who will review and take into consideration the adverse impact on current programming/events, field availability as well as any other relevant factors and may be subject to a user fee.

SECTION 8. INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

- A. Teams and Leagues using town fields/facilities must obtain an insurance policy naming the Town as additionally insured. The insurance policy must provide for general liability coverage with limits of no less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$1,000,000 aggregate for personal injury, bodily injury, and property damage.

SECTION 9. USE DENIAL/REVOCATION

- A. Use of the Fields/Facilities may be denied or revoked by the Superintendent for the following reasons but not limited to:
- Failure to use assigned field.
 - Non-compliance with application/submission requirements and procedures
 - Failure to comply with Field/Facility Use Policy
 - Field renovation or repair
 - For any reason deemed necessary by the Superintendent

SECTION 10. INCLEMENT WEATHER GUIDELINES

- A. The Town is committed to providing high quality and safe playing surfaces for all its

multi-use fields, but we need help and consideration from all user groups in protecting the fields from excessive damage due to practice and game activities. If any of the following conditions occur, practices, scrimmages, and games must be postponed or cancelled:

- Standing water on the field of play
- Field/Soil saturation
 - Walking on turf causes water to surface.
 - The ground is muddy and soil clumps or clings to foot gear.
 - Steady rain on event day which could cause damage to field or injury to participants.
- Audible thunder or visible lightning (resulting in a ½ hour delay after last occurrence)
- Extreme drought conditions where 50% of the playing surface is dormant.
- Poor visibility (darkness)

During periods of inclement weather, the Superintendent shall attempt to notify leagues of field playability status; however, it is the shared responsibility of the Superintendent and league/team officials to determine the appropriate and safe use of fields. If any of the above-noted weather or field conditions apply, league/team officials must postpone or cancel the scheduled activity. The Superintendent shall have final authority over determining the playability of Town fields. All teams must abide by the Superintendent's decision or be subject to forfeiture of future playing dates and/or a security deposit for future use. The Town is not liable for any costs incurred by the team(s) due to cancellations at any time.

It is the responsibility of each League to have an emergency plan in place in the event of pop-up storms with lightning. Should lightning storms develop during practices and games already underway, the Hopkinton teams should enact their emergency plan for all people at the field.

SECTION 11. FIELD/FACILITY MAINTENANCE

- A. The Town will perform and/or approve all maintenance of fields/facilities, spectator areas, and parking areas.
- B. Repairs to league owned and maintained equipment and structures (i.e., netting, cages, bases, and buildings) are the sole responsibility of the league.
- C. If a league or team damages a field/facility beyond what is considered normal wear and tear, or damages a field/facility due to misuse, the league/team will be responsible to work with the Superintendent to make and/or pay for the necessary repairs.
- D. The Superintendent may prohibit scheduled use of fields/facilities if, at the sole judgment of the Superintendent, the field is unsafe for use or that undue damage to

the field will occur as a result of the scheduled use.

- E. Teams using the fields shall limit their use during practice of high traffic areas, such as goal areas and sidelines regardless of weather conditions. Routine practice drills shall be rotated and spread out over the playing surface. Repetitive drills and practices deteriorate field conditions and make it difficult for the Town to service, maintain, and safeguard participants from sustaining injuries.
- F. The fields shall not be in use for warm-ups, practice, or games, when Town staff are working on the field.
- G. Hopkinton residents/organizations using the fields shall leave the fields in “ready condition” for the next user. Ready conditions include holes raked in on baseball/softball fields and pitching wall, all trash picked up and in trash receptacles, all equipment put back in its proper spot, all gates and chains locked behind you. If you arrive at field conditions that are not in ready condition, take pictures to document it and send them to the Superintendent.

SECTION 12. CONCESSIONS

- A. The establishment of any concession shall be approved by the Health Officer and/or the Director before commencement of such operations.
- B. Concessionaires shall maintain all applicable licenses and permits for the operation of a food service business from the Town and State of New Hampshire.
- C. Concessionaires shall provide for proper disposal of trash and waste generated from and by the concession facility, including providing an appropriate number of trash receptacles to support the concessions operation and be responsible for removing said trash from the location at the end of the event and/or day.

SECTION 13. RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. The Department is responsible for providing every organization or user of Town fields/facilities with a copy of this policy.
- B. The Department is responsible for administering and enforcing this policy in a fair and equitable manner.
- C. The Superintendent is responsible for routinely assessing the condition of the fields/facilities during the playing season in conjunction with league/team officials.
- D. It is the responsibility of organizations and users to provide timely and accurate scheduling changes and information to the Department.
- E. It is the responsibility of the organizations and users to ensure that all persons associated with their use of Town fields/facilities understand this policy.

- F. It is the responsibility of the organization or user of the Town field/facilities to ensure that all litter generated in association with their use, is removed from the field, dugouts, spectator areas, and parking areas. The organization is also responsible for moving and securing all field equipment in the requested location at the end of the season.
- G. It is the responsibility of the organization to communicate several months in advance with the Town if the organization plans to bring in additional teams or sports in the future. The additional field impact will need to be evaluated before new programs can be accommodated.
- H. All coaches, referees, and umpires are responsible for ensuring the safety of field playing conditions at all times during scheduled play.
- I. All leagues and organizations are required to designate one representative and alternate to serve as a liaison with the Department to handle field scheduling and playability.
- J. **Relating to every field reservation:** there is no driving on fields or grass areas. Repetitive drills like batting practice must be done in the batting cages, on the gravel next to the pitching wall, or on the dirt track. There is no alcohol without a permit or smoking allowed on Town property. Fields cannot be used during inclement weather, when the soil is saturated or there is standing water on the field surfaces.
- K. **Relating specifically to baseball/softball field reservations:** dirt or water may not be dragged, swept, or pushed into the grass areas.
- L. **Relating specifically to tournaments:** users must leave fields in the ready condition that they found them upon arrival with the fields dragged, all trash cleaned up, and all trash removed from property and disposed of off-site. Trash cans must be left empty and with new proper trash bags in place.

SECTION 14. ACCEPTING PROPERTY

All who wish to donate property, either permanent or temporary, must first submit the proposed donation in writing to the Recreation Department for review. This proposal must include a description of the property, the location to be placed, the length of time to be used, the source of funding for the maintenance and repairs over its useful life and the plan for replacement. Donors will be notified in writing after Select Board review and approval.

SECTION 15 VIOLATIONS

Any infraction or violation of this policy, or local, state, or federal laws and/or regulations, by organizations or users utilizing Town field/facilities shall be considered infractions and may result in the violator being prohibited by the Superintendent from future use, either temporary or permanently. Typical policy violations are, but not limited to, not leaving fields in "ready condition," damage to fields, gates left open and will result in restriction of practice time on town fields (in town seasonal groups) Restrictions will come with a warning to seasonal in town

groups first before restrictions are imposed. One time and tournament users may or may not be given a warning before penalties are imposed.

SECTION 15a. PENALTIES

1st violation. A warning will be given.

2nd violation. 1 practice will be eliminated.

3rd violation. 1 week of practice will be eliminated.

4th violation. No practices for the remainder of the season.

The penalties apply to the ban on any Town owned field. Gross negligence may lead directly to the maximum penalty.

SECTION 16 GRIEVANCE POLICY

Step 1. If a scheduling grievance is received by the Director, he/she will advise the person filing the grievance to contact the appropriate organization, league, or group for a resolution.

Step 2. If the person filing the scheduling grievance does not receive a response within 7 days, they should notify the Director and request a follow-up on their grievance. The Director reserves the right to contact the appropriate organization, league, or group to research the grievance and respond to the grievance with a copy to the Town Administrator.

SECTION 17. APPEALS

Any person aggrieved at any decision made by the Director or Superintendent in the administration or enforcement of this policy may appeal to the Town Administrator. Decisions of the Town Administrator may be appealed to the Select Board. Appeals shall be filed in writing and within 10 days of the decision and contain the decision's subject and a detailed explanation of the alleged error.

SECTION 18. IMPLEMENTATION

To facilitate conduct in accordance with this policy, a copy of this policy shall be made available to department heads, employees, volunteers, boards and commissions upon hiring, appointment, or election to office and at such other times as may be necessary.

Revision History

Revision	Change	Date
001	Adopted by Select Board	12/29/2014
002	Amended by Select Board	02/22/2016
003	Amended by the Select Board	03/03/2022
004	Amended by the Select Board	4/24/2023