

RECREATIONAL FACILITY ALLOCATION POLICY
Council Policy No. 117/09

BACKGROUND:

The City of Fort St John works to responsibly manage its recreational spaces in an equitable manner to meet current and future demands for both organized and casual participants. In doing so, it is important to consider the needs of diverse populations, groups, and individuals while recognizing the tax-based contribution provided by residents toward the development and operation of community recreation assets.

PURPOSE:

To ensure there is a policy with procedures that the City of Fort St John can use to coordinate, schedule and operate recreation facilities to ensure optimum usage and programming while being fiscally responsible.

DEFINITIONS:

- a) Commercial: An individual or organization who is utilizing the facility for the purpose of making a profit.
- b) Director: shall mean the Director of Community Services for the City of Fort St John.
- c) Family Skate: Time designated for families to skate, children under 11 years must be accompanied by a guardian.
- d) Junior Sport: Competitive sport for players generally between the ages of 16 and 20 years old based out of Fort St. John. These groups hold a current contract with the City and normally require facilities on a regular schedule throughout the full season. Includes but is not limited to the Fort St John Huskies.
- e) Senior Competitive Group: A Fort St. John based non-profit organization with 80% of membership 18 years of age or older focused on amateur or semi-professional competition. These groups hold a current contract with the City and normally require facilities on a regular schedule throughout the full season. Includes but is not limited to the Fort St John Flyers.
- f) Local Recreational Adult Group: A Fort St. John based non-profit organization made up of individuals who are 18 years of age or older who hold a current contract with the City for recreational use. This group normally requires facilities on a regular schedule throughout the full season.
- g) Local Casual User: A Fort St. John based individual or organization who does not hold a current contract with the City and requires facilities on a one time or casual basis.
- h) Local Minor Users: A Fort St. John based non-profit organization, league, recreational program or association with 80% of membership under 19 years of age and holds a current contract with the City. This group normally requires facilities on a regular schedule throughout the full season.
- i) Non-Prime Time: Monday to Friday between 6:00 am and 3:00 pm. Does not apply during statutory holidays.

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DEFINITIONS: (continued)

- j) Public Skate: Time designated for skating only.
- k) Regional Teams: Teams comprised of the best available players in their age-appropriate division that have been selected to represent the Northeast in league, exhibition, tournament and provincial competition.
- l) School Programs: Organized sport teams representing School District #60 and private schools in Fort St. John shall be considered Local Minor Users for the purpose of this policy.
- m) Special Events: An organized exhibition or demonstration of limited duration that creates general public interest.
- n) Annual Special Events: Includes all special events that are re-occurring on an annual basis.
- o) Major Sporting Events: Includes any major single sporting event that occurs occasionally. These events are characterized by:
 - Competition at the national or provincial level.
 - The provision of high performance competition for BC athletes
 - The generation of substantial publicity.
 - The provision of opportunities for the development of Fort St. John officials.
 - The provision of opportunities for the development of BC coaches.
 - The strengthening of the volunteer resource within that sport.
 - A resulting capital legacy for the sporting community.
- p) Visitor: An individual or organization based outside the corporate boundaries of the City and is not using the facility for a commercial purpose.
- q) Spring Ice: Ice bookings between April 1-April 30
- r) Summer Ice: Ice bookings between May 1-August 31.
- s) Dry Floor: Non-ice bookings in indoor facilities
- t) Regular Ice: Ice bookings between September 1-March 31.
- u) Athletic Fields: City owned, operated or maintained outdoor fields used for sport including but not limited to soccer pitches, ball diamonds, tennis courts or similar.
- v) Club Skating: Users belonging to the Fort St John Elks Speed Skating Club.
- w) High Performance Skating: For elite athletes to train and develop in order to achieve greater success in national and international competition.

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ALLOCATION AUTHORITY:

All allocation authority shall reside with the Director of Community Services. Appeals may be forwarded to the City Manager for consideration.

METHOD OF ALLOCATION:

Recreation facility allocation is based on a fair and equitable distribution of available space. Every effort shall be made to accommodate all requests so that user groups can meet their anticipated requirements.

Previous year's usage shall provide a starting point for the initial development of each schedule. If enrollment/registration numbers significantly decrease, the City reserves the right to potentially decrease allotted time if demand from other users is shown.

In recognition of the role municipal facilities play in the development of minor sport, special consideration shall be given to accommodating youth activities. Programs for younger children will receive priority over older youth and adults when allocating early evening ice time on weekdays (3:30 to 9:00 p.m.) and on weekends up to 6:00 pm.

The City also recognizes the great value the Kids Arena provided for young Fort St. John athletes. As such, minor sport shall have booking priority on one ice surface at the Enerplex facility during the regular season in lieu of the Kid's Area, in addition to the other normal bookings at the North Peace Arena.

The City shall determine ice requirements for Family and Public Skating according to the demand and usage by the general public. Specific amounts of time will be set according to need.

The City recognizes the significant positive impacts that special events can provide to the community and is committed to achieving a balance between recreational and special event uses. The City will work to minimize disruption to regular programs and league play when accommodating Special Events. Annual Special Events dates will automatically be given a tentative hold of their consistent annual calendar dates for up to two years in advance. Confirmation of dates is required a minimum of eleven months in advance. Two consecutive cancellations will result in a loss of annual user status.

School Programs shall be given priority between the hours of 9:00 am – 3:30 pm Monday to Friday.

Space will be allocated in time blocks to each organization entering into annual contract. It is each group's responsibility to assign ice times to their member groups. No groups are permitted to sublease their booked times. It is expected that space/ice will be utilized in the manner it is booked. Failure to do so may impact future rental privileges.

The City will annually conduct a cost/benefit analysis for the provision of ice facilities during the spring-summer months.

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ICE REQUESTS:

All requests for regular ice must be submitted to the Community Services Department using the Ice Use Application Form by no later than June 30 of each calendar year. Applications received after this date will be considered on a first-come first served basis within the priorities of this policy.

Applications for spring ice must be received by February 15 of the current year.

Applications for summer ice must be received by April 15 of the current year.

Casual ice rentals (those rentals made by an individual or group that is not in a regular seasonal contract with the City) shall not be considered booked or reserved unless appropriate contracts are signed and ice rental fees paid in advance.

No user will be allocated ice time if there is an outstanding account from the previous year.

PRIORITIZATION FOR SUSTAINING USE (ARENAS):

Ice shall be distributed using the following priority list as a guideline:

- a) Public/Family Skating
- b) Minor Users
- c) School Programs
- d) Junior Games
- e) Senior Competitive Games
- f) Annual Special Event
- g) Special Event
- h) Junior (Practice)
- i) Senior Competitive (Practice)
- j) Regional Team Game
- k) Adult Users
- l) Regional Teams Practice
- m) Occasional and Commercial Users

OPENING ARENAS OUTSIDE OF STANDARD HOURS OF OPERATION:

The opening of arena facilities on statutory holidays, when they are normally closed, or beyond established operating hours will be considered pending the availability of staff. All users will pay double for arena bookings on statutory holidays determined by the City. Submitting an application does not guarantee approval.

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PRIORITIZATION FOR SUSTAINING USE (OVAL):

Due to its highly specialized use/purpose, ice on the oval shall be distributed using the following priority list as a guideline:

- a) Public/Family Skating
- b) Club Skating
- c) High Performance Skating
- d) Annual Special Event
- e) Special Event
- f) Adult Users
- g) Occasional and Commercial Users

ATHLETIC FIELD AND OTHER NON-ICE REQUESTS:

All annual requests for athletic fields must be submitted to the Community Services Department using the Recreation Facility Use Application Form by no later than April 1 of each calendar year. Applications received after this date will be considered on a first-come first served basis within the priorities of this policy.

No user will be allocated time if there is an outstanding account from the previous year.

PRIORITIZATION FOR SUSTAINING USE (ATHLETIC FIELDS AND OTHER NON-ICE):

Space shall be distributed using the following priority list as a guideline:

- a) Minor Users
- b) School Programs
- c) Major Special Events
- d) Regional Team Game
- e) Adult Users
- f) Regional Teams Practice
- g) Occasional and Commercial Users

NEW ORGANIZATION/EMERGING SPORT:

When reasonable and feasible, the City will recognize a new organization, emerging sport or team and will allocate ice time to enable it to establish its programs and services in the region.

New programs/services and sponsoring organizations/associations will be accommodated only to provide for unmet community needs. Existing or new groups must demonstrate/justify the need for a new program or service. Recognition and space/ice allocation will occur once the conditions and criteria outlined in this Policy are met and if existing affiliated users will not be adversely affected.

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NEW ORGANIZATION/EMERGING SPORT: (continued)

The City will use unallocated time first to meet the needs of a new applicant but reserves the right to reasonably reallocate hours from existing users, if warranted.

Should a team/organization take a leave of absence from facility use they shall receive no guarantee that they will receive the same ice allocation as previously held should they wish to rebook the facilities at a future date. These teams/organizations shall be considered New/Emerging for the purpose of this policy once they wish to book ice once more.

CONTRACT AMENDMENTS, CANCELLATION AND UNUSED SPACE/ICE:

The City has the right to control all recreation facility distribution and use at City owned facilities for the duration of all contracts. Controls must be in place to minimize the negative impacts that unused, returned, amended and cancelled space/ice can have on the City and its users. As such the City will apply all guidelines outlined in this Policy to reasonably and responsibly manage unused bookings or changing needs once contracts have been issued.

All changes to bookings must be coordinated through the Community Services Department. User groups may not transfer or reassign their allocated times without the consent of the City.

CANCELLATIONS:

User Groups shall notify the Community Services Department 14 calendar days in advance in writing if they are unable to use the scheduled game or practice time. Failing notification within 14 calendar days, the group will be charged for the rental at current rates if the space is not used. If the City is able to reallocate the space, the group that cancelled will be charged an administration fee as per the City's fees and charges.

In order to minimize user dissatisfaction and related negative impacts, the City will notify the Groups of any cancellations as soon as possible and will post signage reflecting any such changes (not withstanding unforeseen facility maintenance issues and Acts of God).

Special events which require a block booking of a minimum of 8 hours require 20 days' notice of cancellation, otherwise the group will be charged for the rental at current rates whether or not the space is otherwise used.

Associations incurring no-show hours will be charged for the scheduled hours that were unused.

Public and/or Family Skating Cancellations: In order to minimize user dissatisfaction and related negative impacts, the City will only cancel Public and/or Family Skating 14 days in advance and will post signage reflecting this.

Schedules: During evening and weekends, Facility staff shall have final authority over the schedule and shall grant access based on the posted schedule only. Facility staff is unable to make changes to the schedule at any time. Any discrepancies should be brought to the attention of the Community Services Department on the next business day.

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CANCELLATIONS: (continued)

Groups must leave the ice surface immediately following the conclusion of their rental period.

The City reserves the right to cancel or delay any ice booking(s) for the purpose of repairs, extended maintenance and/or when the condition of the ice causes concern for health and safety. At no time is anyone allowed on the ice or athletic field surfaces during maintenance.

Tournament Schedules: Tournament schedules must be submitted to the City 7 days prior to the tournament. Schedules received after this time cannot be guaranteed. Users are not permitted to book ice that will go unused for the purpose of ensuring that sufficient time is available as a contingency for tournaments or league games. Unused ice reflects badly on the permit holder and on the City's administration space and is not acceptable.

INSURANCE:

Organizations shall be required to carry liability insurance in an amount sufficient enough in the organization's view to protect itself and the City from liability during the term of the contract (minimum \$2,000,000). The City shall be added to the organization's liability policy as an additional named insured with respect to the operations of the lessee. The organization shall file a copy of its liability insurance with the City upon submission of the rental agreement. The City shall have final authority in determining if the amount of third party liability coverage is sufficient. Certificates of insurance evidencing the coverage must be submitted to the City.

COMMUNICATION:

Organization representatives are required to communicate the process of space allocations to their membership, bring forward issues from their group, consider options in dealing with allocations, and negotiate allocations on behalf of their organizations.

An annual User Meeting will be held for annual Ice and Athletic Field bookings. The City reserves the right to call the group together whenever the need arises.

Confirmation and/or notice of cancellation/changes to the schedules will be sent via letter and/or telephone to user groups through their president or designate where feasible.

All email requests to the City will be acknowledged within 24 hours (Monday – Friday) or by noon Monday if sent during the weekend. In case of a Statutory Holiday, requests will be acknowledged by noon the next business day following the holiday. If the sender does not receive confirmation during this 24-hour period it is the sender's responsibility to follow-up through other means (eg. telephone, in person, etc.).

Cancellations, requests or other information sent by either party via email will not be considered sent until confirmation is received. Cancellations received via email will be subject to the minimum cancellation timelines outlined in this policy.

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RULES AND REGULATIONS:

Dressing Rooms: All users shall vacate the dressing rooms within 45 minutes of the conclusion of their rental period. Dressing Rooms will be assigned by the Facility Manager or designate. Dressing Room keys will only be issued to managers or coaches. The City is not responsible for losses incurred while equipment is left in dressing rooms.

Vandalism: contracted ice times and the users of that time are the responsibility of the user group. The group is responsible for the conduct, control and supervision of its participants while in the facility at all times during their scheduled use.

Alcohol/Illegal Substances: A “Zero Tolerance” approach will be taken regarding alcoholic beverages in City facilities. Absolutely no alcoholic beverages are allowed in City facilities unless the proper permits and deposits have been obtained. At no time is alcohol allowed in the building on a casual basis. Failure to comply will result in the RCMP being called and the immediate suspension of rental privileges for the group.

FEES:

Fees and charges are established by City Council. Immediately upon approval or amendment to the Fees and Charges, such changes shall be communicated to the user groups. Approved fees shall include any federal or provincial taxes and will be charged to the user where applicable.

Invoices: User groups will be invoiced monthly for ice used in the preceding month. When calculating usage, increments of 15 minutes will be used including flood time. The City reserves the right to request groups pay for bookings prior to use. All casual ice rentals must be pre-paid.

User groups with outstanding accounts will be denied booking privileges until outstanding accounts past 60 days are paid in full.