



Municipal Facility Use Policies and Guidelines for Athletics

I. Policy and Intent

Eligibility

Residents of York (“residents”) are eligible to participate in youth athletic programs administered by the York Parks and Recreation Department (“Department”). In some cases, and if space permits, Non-Residents will also be allowed participation in some athletic programs.

It is the Department’s intent and desire to provide access to fields, gymnasiums and other recreational facilities, to the extent practicable, by sport (ie. soccer, baseball, softball, etc.) and not by organization (ie. Little League, Soccer Club, etc.). After the needs of the Parks and Recreation Department programs have been fulfilled, the remaining field and gym time, shall be allocated first to Interscholastic programs run by York School Department and then to recognized Independent Sports Organizations (“ISO”) for their recognized programs, and receive from such recognized programs their schedules. The Parks and Recreation Department will facilitate seasonal field scheduling meetings to include school, recreation and ISO representatives.

It is the Department’s intent to provide support for recognized open enrollment, hybrid and selective programs, in accordance with the needs of the community as determined by the Department.

For purposes of this Policy,

“**open enrollment**” is defined as open to all eligible participants for which no try-out or other skill-based selection is necessary;

“**hybrid**” is defined as requiring try-outs or other skill-based selection for participation on a team or in a division, but having a team or division available to all eligible participants; and

“**selective**” is defined as requiring try-outs or other skill-based selection in order to be selected for participation.

An ISO may become recognized by the Department if it meets the criteria set by the Parks and Recreation Department (refer to section II). An ISO may seek recognition of one or more programs with respect to one or more seasons a year, as described below; a program cannot be recognized unless the sponsoring organization is recognized. Recognition of specific programs of a recognized ISO does not confer recognition for all future programs.

Fields, gymnasiums and other recreational facilities may be allocated by the Parks and Recreation Department only to recognized ISO's for programs recognized for a specific season or seasons. It shall be within the discretion of the Parks and Recreation Department to recognize an ISO or its program(s), thereby providing access to fields, gymnasiums and other recreational facilities for athletic programs even if such ISO program would compete with programs previously recognized by the Parks and Recreation Department for the same sport.

Existing Organizational Structures

Four (4) program structures currently operate in the Town of York:

1. Those administered by the Parks and Recreation Department. These include those operated by volunteer coaches and programs administered by subcontractors and/or paid staff/coaches.
2. Those administered by the York School Department.
3. Those administered by ISO volunteer boards.
4. Those administered by for profit organizations.

New Programs

In the event that an ISO desires to:

- a. Run the primary program currently conducted for a sport by the Department; or
- b. Create a new program for a sport not presently offered; or
- c. Create an additional program for a sport presently offered,

The Department shall determine whether:

1. The ISO meets the criteria for recognition
2. There is sufficient demand and/or need for the program
3. There is adequate facilities to support the creation of such program

Such proposals shall be presented to the Parks and Recreation Department for a determination subject to consideration of any recommendation.

II. Becoming a Recognized and Independent Sports Organization

The Department will consider an ISO for recognition if it meets the following minimum criteria. Once an ISO has been granted recognition, it will continue as long as the organization remains in good standing and continues to meet the criteria listed below.

A. Criteria for Recognition

Each year the below criteria will be reviewed as part of the recognition process.

1. Required Organizational Structure

- The ISO must be recognized by the Town of York, the County of York and/or the State of Maine, as an incorporated or non-incorporated entity, with the power to conduct its affairs. The ISO, if incorporated must be a not for profit corporation and if not incorporated must operate as a not for profit.
- A majority of the participants in the ISO's program(s) should be York residents.
- The ISO must be governed by a Board of Directors (or similar body) whose majority of members must be residents of the Town of York. The members of the Board of Directors (or similar body) must be determined by the organization membership at an open meeting, and should serve a finite term.
- The BOD (or similar body) must conduct regularly scheduled meetings, properly noticed and open to the general membership. In addition, the organization should hold an annual "open meeting" to which the public is encouraged to attend.
- The ISO shall conduct its financial affairs in a manner consistent with generally accepted business practices. The yearly annual financial report should be available to the general membership.
- The ISO shall be held responsible for the actions of those in leadership positions including, but not limited to, instructors, managers, coaches, etc.

- ISO's that use municipal or school facilities shall provide to the Department proof of liability insurance coverage naming the municipal and/or school as appropriate, as an additional insured.
- The ISO must submit (as part of its organizational structure) written By-Laws for their organization.
- The ISO must maintain a website which provides the organization's background, contact information for members of the Board of Directors, its mission statement, policies and procedures, and rules of conduct for the sports program.

2. Required Organizational Policies

- The ISO must provide a statement of "mission "or purpose.
- The ISO shall agree to abide by a written code of conduct, as drafted by its governing board or organization. The Code of Conduct must be provided to the Parks and Recreation Department as an accompaniment to the recognition application and should be consistent with the standards of the Parks and Recreation Department.
- It is strongly recommended that the ISOs that operate programs in more than one season limit their activities to a single season. For those programs who decide to offer multi-season programs, it is strongly recommended that:
 - a) multi-season commitments should not be a condition for participation;
 - b) no prejudice should result toward any child who chooses to participate on less than a multi-season basis; and
 - c) scheduling conflicts with other sports during the off season will be resolved in favor of the in- season sport.

The Parks and Recreation Department will seek voluntary compliance with this provision.

- An ISO must publish and post on its website a grievance procedure that is satisfactory to the Parks and Recreation Department
- An ISO should, to the best of their ability, advertise through multiple avenues, all important registration information, including deadline dates and rules to all potential participants.

3. Required Coach and Team Policies

- ISOs will communicate to coaches, parents, players and spectators the Code of Conduct, or other set of conduct guidelines if they are substantially similar in purpose and effect, towards children, game officials, and other parent/coaches. The Code of Conduct (or guidelines) are to be distributed to all parents and coaches. The ISO must develop a process to ensure that the guidelines are understood by parents and coaches before the season begins.
- ISOs must maintain and distribute to parents and coaches and/or plainly post on their website, written policies on playing time which are age appropriate and fair.
- ISOs should consider having coaches, and inviting all parents, to participate in clinics which focus on or include positive coaching principles, rules of the game by age group, fairness, playing time policies, codes of conduct and developmentally appropriate skill development. It is recommended that coaches have some form of training/certification.
- ISOs must establish guidelines and procedures for coach selection, which shall include an open application process in an effort to expand pool of coaches. It is recommended that background checks should be conducted on the coaches of the teams.
- ISOs shall create and communicate a mechanism to receive and respond to concerns about coaching or other issues in a manner that protects the confidentiality of the communication and prevents retribution against that parent's child.
- ISOs shall monitor performance by the game officials.
- ISOs which select children on teams chosen by evaluation of skill should make such selections by using independent evaluators, or if not practical using a combination

of independent evaluators and parents. It is recommended that a parent of a child who is trying out for a team may not participate in selection of that team.

- ISOs shall develop and communicate fair policies on how children are placed open enrollment teams. This may include, but is not limited to how the ISO deals with requests from parents for child placement on teams, whether or not late registrations are accepted, etc.

B. Guidelines for Program Acceptance and Renewal of Recognized Status

A recognized ISO may seek recognition of one or more programs. “Recognition” shall be conferred by the Parks and Recreation Department on a program of a recognized ISO after satisfactory review and acceptance of the pertinent information related to each program, subject to consideration of any recommendation of the Parks and Recreation Department.

A material expansion or contradiction of an existing program, such as, but not limited to, game and practice schedules, special events such as tournaments, establishment of a new activity (whether or not on a trial basis) or otherwise, shall in each case require separate recognition.

Each ISO will be required to meet with the Parks and Recreation Department to review its recognition status and its recognized programs once a year or as requested. Prior to such meeting the ISO shall submit to the Department written responses to the following questions and be prepared to discuss them. In addition, the ISO shall make available to its membership their Youth Sports Policies and Guidelines and their answers to the questions below.

1. What is the structure for governing the ISO and its program?
2. If the ISO and/or any of its programs are affiliated with a local, state or national organization, what are its requirements?
3. What are the total numbers of program participants, by category? (ie: individual athletes, teams, age groups, gender groups,) .Please provide breakdown by grade as part of your submission.
4. What is the projected growth of the program? Have you seen any increasing or declining trends in your program?
5. What, if any challenges or initiatives is your organization discussing for the coming year?
6. What support is offered to program leaders in terms of coaches’ and manager’s training, ie. first aid training, CPR, etc.
7. How are participants assigned to teams?

8. How are fees determined? Do you offer scholarships or fee reductions? What percentage of your participants receives these accommodations? Please provide the proposed fee structure for participation in your sports program for the current year and for the previous year.
9. How is equipment maintained and replaced?
10. Does each program within the ISO have open tryouts and what are the guidelines and procedures for notifying potential participants of the tryouts and selecting participants?
11. How does the ISO solicit and receive feedback on the overall program and coaches?
12. How are coaches selected? Are background checks completed on coaches? Please describe the background check process and what parameters are used?
13. What is required from parents?
14. How does the ISO assure fairness of contests? Are umpires and referees required to be certified?
15. What is the normal weekly time commitment, allocated between practices, games and other events?
16. Describe the role of training in relation to games. Are professional trainers to be used? Are those in leadership positions (instructors, managers, coaches, clinicians, etc.) required to have any level of formal certification or take any particular course?
17. Describe elements of the program designed to develop and improve sportsmanship.
18. Who schedules practices and games?
19. Is the program or activity reasonably expected to be in competition with any existing recognized program or activity in the same sport?

III Support for Recognized ISOs and Their Programs

Equal access to publicity

- All recognized ISOs shall be included in the Parks and Recreation Department brochures, listed in the “other organizations” section.

- All recognized ISOs shall be provided with space to include/attach program flyers to the Parks and Recreation Department's e-newsletter. Flyers should be presented to the Parks and Recreation Office in PDF format.

Field and Facilities Assignment

The Parks and Recreation Department shall assign access to the available municipal fields, gymnasiums and other recreational facilities (through seasonal field meetings) in consideration of the following factors:

- Priority will be given to primary season sports
- Enrollment in each program
- Necessary field usage for each particular athletic program (ie. the number of times per week a program requires fields, gymnasiums and other recreational facilities for practices and games), bearing in mind gender equity. Appropriate facility usage applications must be submitted to the Parks and Recreation Department for final approval.

Field and Facilities Maintenance

- The Parks and Recreation Department shall maintain all school and municipal athletic fields. The Parks and Recreation Department will ensure that all fields are safe and playable for the participating sports programs.
- There shall be no smoking or use of alcoholic beverages allowed on school or municipal facilities.
- The Parks and Recreation Department reserves the right to cancel or not schedule activities at the facilities when deemed necessary (ie. weather, field conditions, etc.)
- ISOs should assign one representative to serve as the communication liaison with the Department's Parks Foreman with regard to all maintenance concerns. E-mail communication is preferred with the exception of emergency.
- ISOs should not make any physical changes to fields and facilities without permission from the Parks and Recreation Department.
- ISOs should make the Parks and Recreation Department aware of any field or facility maintenance needs.

Limited Logistical Support

- The Department shall assist each program with the lining and preparation of fields for play.
- The Department shall make available equipment as needed, to persons designated proficient by the ISO and the Department. Equipment may include, but is not limited to scoreboards, public address systems and pitching machines.
- The Department shall assist programs at the Bog Road facility with suggestions for successful parking solutions.

Concession Stands

Concession stands will be made available for the ISO's use during the season. The stands shall not be used for the storage of ISO equipment in the off season. Keys will be distributed no earlier than two weeks prior to the start of the season and collected no later than two weeks following the completion of the season. Inspections will be performed at the time of key collection from each ISO.

IV Non-Resident ISOs and For Profit Athletic Organizations

The Parks and Recreation Department will review and evaluate each Non-Resident and For-Profit Athletic Organizations individually, and using fair judgement will authorize the use of fields and facilities when it is considered in the best interest of the community and the facilities.

