



City of Edmonton Sports Fields Allocation Guide

The following user guide is designed to give Edmonton residents an understanding of the City of Edmonton's Sports Fields allocation (distribution of field time) and booking model.

Additional resources can be found online at www.edmonton.ca - specifically at the main [Sports Fields webpage](#).



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The City of Edmonton provides outdoor sport field facilities for use by members of the public, as well as organized groups. From natural grass to artificial turf, there are various levels and standards of these maintained fields, which are great for both recreational and competitive use!

Introductory Information

Fair and Equitable Model for Allocation User Engagement

The allowance for groups' sports field requests at City outdoor sport field facilities are governed by the City of Edmonton's fair and equitable model for allocation.

Fair: Users have a say in the allocation model and the conflict resolution process that will be used, via communication with COE Administration and their sport representative on the Sports Field User Committee (SFUC)

Equitable: Everyone should have a fair opportunity to access sport field facilities.

The Fair and Equitable model for sports field allocation is overseen by the City of Edmonton's SFUC and the City of Edmonton Administration.

The fair and equitable allocation process is used to determine how fields at City outdoor sport field facilities are allocated between different user groups. While the specific criteria of the allocation process are in a state of constant evolution and refinement, the model is comprised of the following four major elements:

1. User Engagement
2. Incorporation of Standards of Play
3. Calculation of Demand, Supply & Entitlement (Hours)
4. Allocation of Time (Hours)

User Engagement

Users are actively involved in the ongoing review and refinement of how time and facilities are allocated amongst them; this is integral to the fair and equitable allocation process. For example, user engagement occurs primarily through the following:

- *Sports Field User Committee:* An advisory committee composed of up to two representatives from each of the major sporting and recreational activities, who work closely with City representatives to ensure the equitable distribution of time and resolve issues related to sport field use and planning. SFUC sport representative positions are voted in 3-year term rotations at the annual general meeting in January of each year.

- *Involvement of all users:* representatives from all user groups that qualified for the upcoming seasons allocation (based on the amount of time they booked the previous season, refer to page 7), are invited to attend regular information sharing sessions (specifically the January annual general meeting before allocation begins), submit time requests, participate in the multi-stakeholder facilitated allocation process reviews, and are encouraged to nominate members into the Sports Field User Committee.

Incorporation of Standards of Play

The Standards of Play identify the sport field needs that each sport activity and recreation type requires in order to run a successful program within City limits. These standards are based on a review of the guidelines of each sport's provincial (or national) governing body, historical usage, and recommendations from the Sports Field User Committee (SFUC). The standards are set by activity, reviewed on an annual basis, and then approved by the SFUC.

The Standards of Play determine a standard amount of hours required by each sport and age group to successfully participate in their program. With the understanding that certain levels, age groups, clubs/zones and competition could vary. By having this structure we ensure that groups are only using the time they require and that no 'hoarding' of time is occurring. This also ensures that new groups have the opportunity to grow their leagues. Factors such as number of players, minimum space, time requirements, and practice needs by specific sport type are identified, as illustrated in the example below.

Sport	Category	Total Games	Artificial Turf Games	Game Length	Practices	Practice Length	Required Field
Baseball - Little League	4, 5, and 6 Years - BB	8	-	2	8	1.5	150 Diamond
Football	Adult - FTB	8	8	2.5	20	2.5	Combo Field

Calculation of Demand, Supply & Entitlement

Sport Field demand is calculated using the previous season's enrollment plus the projected change in demand (e.g., requests for new time, groups on waiting lists) and applying the standards of play to get the total time required by sport activity and recreation type.

Sport Field supply is calculated by sub-dividing fields into their different classifications and rental time availability (recognizing that not all sport fields and rental times are equally preferred).

Entitlement is calculated by dividing demand to fit the level of supply and to find the percentage share of all supply categories. This represents each sport type's fair and equitable share of available time that they can obtain during allocation.

Upon completion of allocation and when the "open season" booking period begins (traditionally, at the start of April), user groups are permitted to exceed their hour entitlement total that they had to stay at/under during the allocation period. This process allows user groups to obtain more time for their teams/programs if they need, while still giving every user group an equitable amount of time that they require (based on their participant number and sport needs) during the initial allocation period in February/March.

Distribution of Time

The City of Edmonton Sports Fields booking team facilitates the distribution of sport field time in accordance with the established allocation rules, strategies, and conflict resolution processes.

For example, due to an increase in applications, the committee may identify that all user groups will be able to protect a percentage of their previous year's rental time slots (i.e., rollovers) in an effort to balance historic usage while providing equitable opportunities for all users to access previously unavailable time slots.

To illustrate further, in the 2023 Summer season, as a one-year trial, the SFUC put forth a motion where only 75% of Staffed diamond time for each group could be kept via rollover, with the excess time returned into the availability pool for allocation.

All eligible user groups have the opportunity to attend an open and transparent process to acquire available time slots through the pre-established allocation process. The inventory supply is divided into a variety of categories, each having their own allocation window period and include: Staffed Diamonds, Grass Rectangle Fields, Grass Diamonds, Staffed Grass/Artificial Turf for Games and Staffed Grass/Artificial Turf for Practices.

Sports Field User Committee (SFUC)

Vision

The needs of Edmonton's sports field users are met through equitable, unhindered access to all City of Edmonton outdoor sport field facilities. The SFUC is an advisory group that recognizes the needs of the citizens of Edmonton, and strives to manage the allocation of sport fields and plan for future needs given the resources of the City of Edmonton and its partners.

Purpose

To advise processes and strategies for the sport field users to advance an equitable allocation system to the City of Edmonton. The committee serves in an advisory capacity, providing objective advice and recommendations from a citizen perspective, while also assisting COE Administration with conflicts or inquiries between sport field user groups.

The key duties and responsibilities of the SFUC are as follows:

- To ensure that the allocation of sport field time by the City of Edmonton is within the terms of the fair and equitable allocation process.
- To conduct a complete review at the end of each yearly allocation cycle.
- To identify issues, offer advice, and/or develop strategies related to the provision of sports fields to Edmonton residents.

The committee is composed of the following members who represent each major sport and recreation group, as well as new, emerging groups requiring sports field facilities:

- Chair and Vice Chair
- One representative (and potential alternate representative) each from Rugby, Soccer, Slo-Pitch, Baseball, Ultimate Frisbee, Track and Field, Fastpitch/Softball, Football, and Cricket.
- Representatives from the School Boards, Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues, and Metro Athletics.
- Non-voting representatives from the City of Edmonton.

SFUC member positions for sport representatives are voted in 3 year term rotations at the annual general meeting in January of each year. Criteria for nomination (or appointment in event of no new nominations), are: basis of experience and expertise, interest and/or engagement, availability to attend meetings, and strong commitment to the terms of reference.

Chair and Vice chair, who sit for a 2 year term, are elected by the committee members. SFUC members may have one alternate representative should they not be able to attend a meeting.

Allocation Process and Timelines

Application for Sports Fields

User groups that qualify for allocation (see “Qualification” section below), will have the opportunity to submit an application to participate in the allocation process starting in November. The allocation application form will be submitted and reviewed by the City of Edmonton Sports Fields booking department. The application form will gather all necessary information from each user group in order to successfully proceed with the allocation process for the upcoming season.

All other user groups will have an opportunity to request rental time during Open Season by submitting the online form found on the [Sports Fields](#) webpage or sending requests via email. The Open Season date is traditionally on the first Tuesday of April each year.

Eligible User Groups

In order to take part in user group allocation for outdoor sport field facilities, user groups must be one of the following:

- A City-sponsored or operated program/group, OR
- A registered not-for-profit organization under the Societies Act of Alberta, OR
- Part 9 of the Companies Act, OR
- Part 21 of the Business Corporations Act, OR
- Special act of the Parliament of Canada, OR
- Special act of the Alberta Legislature, OR
- A non-registered informal organization or group without paid leadership

AND

- Must be covered by the City of Edmonton’s insurance
- Have a minimum of 75% City of Edmonton residents
- Have a minimum of 12 participants per booking

Groups that qualify for allocation will be provided with timelines, processes for each type of sports field allocation, and information regarding the Annual General Meeting (which takes place in January). Any changes to the allocation process will be announced during the Annual General Meeting.

Qualification for Allocation

Based on a group's historical usage from the previous season, they will be assigned to one or more of the groups outlined in the table below.

Field Type	Qualification	Roll Over
Artificial Turf Clareview Clarke JP Bowl Mill Woods	Minimum 10 hours booked and used on Artificial Turf last season	Partial (League game times take priority in rollover, Practice time is based on pick-ups and conflict resolution with other groups)
Staffed Diamonds Goldstick John Fry Staffed Grass Coronation Goldstick Rollie Miles (TRACK ONLY)	Minimum 10 hours booked and used last season	75% of last season's bookings <i>Rollie Miles Track</i> : 100% of last season's bookings
MAJOR - Grass Rectangle & Diamond	Minimum 30 hours per week for at least 8 weeks* booked last season	Up to 100% of entitlement
SEASONAL - Grass Rectangle & Diamond	Minimum 1 hour per week (up to 30) for at least 8 weeks* booked last season	Up to 100% of entitlement

***Weeks do not have to be consecutive.**

Priority will be given to residents of the City of Edmonton, and user groups that are minor or adult not-for-profit organizations. Residency is defined as a minimum of 75% Edmonton-based participants. Minor user groups qualify by having 75% or more of their membership under 18, otherwise they will be classified as an Adult user group.

Non-resident groups will be considered on a first come, first served basis after allocation if fields and/or time are available after resident demand is satisfied, and under special circumstances, such as reciprocal agreements.

Groups that are in arrears with the City of Edmonton will not be included in allocation.

Allocation Timeline

NOVEMBER	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL
Eligible user groups will receive the Allocation and Tournament application forms and Allocation Timeline.	Annual General Meeting	Staffed Diamond Allocation	User groups receive contracts for the upcoming season.	Open Season
		Grass Rectangle Allocation		
	Allocation and Tournament application forms due.	Artificial Turf Allocation	Signed contracts due.	
		Grass Diamond Allocation		

*NOTE: Allocation steps are **time sensitive**. Please ensure your contact information is up-to-date to ensure distribution and communication of information takes place in a timely fashion.*

Tournaments

Sport or recreational tournament application requests are accepted by the City of Edmonton from November to January for the upcoming season (May-October).

By submitting an application form during this time, the event will have the opportunity of being confirmed in advance. All events will need to be approved by City Administration (and with consultation with the SFUC - if necessary). Any event conflicting with another will be brought to the SFUC to determine which event will take precedence.

Requests submitted after the initial application deadline will be reviewed once allocation is completed.

Selection criteria are as follows:

- Event sanction (International, National, Provincial, Inter-Provincial, Local, Recreational)
- Historical vs. New

The tournament application form will be accessible on the City of Edmonton [Sports Fields](#) webpage. An email may also be sent to sportsfieldbookings@edmonton.ca for a direct link to the form.

Sports Fields Allocation

Eligible user groups will be invited to participate in Allocation and will receive an invitation via email; the response to which is mandatory to confirm if they will be taking part.

Objectives

Decisions about the allocation and scheduling of City-operated sports field facilities are intended to achieve the following objectives:

- Promote inclusivity and encourage the participation of diverse user groups, while responding to their needs for sports fields / facilities.
- Ensure optimal sports field / facility usage and programming.
- Permit the planning and implementation of special sport events and programs in which a large number of people are expected to participate.
- Provide flexibility to accommodate changing community needs and demands for sports fields and facilities.
- Respond to the needs of sports and sports organizations in a fair, transparent, consistent and equitable manner.

Priorities

The allocation of venue time is considered as follows:

1. Tournaments and Championships

- Applications will be forwarded to the SFUC for approval ahead of Allocation.
- **Approved** Tournaments and Championships sanctioned by the sport's Provincial/National governing body will be given first priority, and will not be factored into a group's entitlement.

2. Game Competition

- Groups may receive rollovers prior to the start of allocation and will be able to pick up rental time up to their awarded entitlement at the meetings.
- We will be auditing and monitoring these GAME bookings with the Staffed Facilities Operations team (who submit a post-shift report to our Bookings team after each evening). **That being said, if user groups book these timeslots for practices/training use, and not for league-game use, you could be subject to losing all of your artificial turf bookings for the remainder of the season.** Obviously, special circumstances, such as a forfeiture game and the field being used by one team for practice or exhibition games, will be acceptable.

- All groups picking up time for Game Competition will be considered on equal footing. If groups request the same facility at the same date/time, they will need to work collaboratively through the Conflict Resolution process to come to an agreement. If no compromise/agreement is made, then the conflict will escalate to the arbitrary Sportsfields User Committee who will make a decision that will stand as final.

3. **Practice, Try-Outs, Camps/Training, For Profit Groups (Ex. Groups who are not eligible for allocation)**

- All groups picking up time for practices will be considered on equal footing during the allocation process. If groups request the same facility at the same date/time, they will need to work collaboratively through the Conflict Resolution process to come to an agreement. If no compromise/agreement is made, then the conflict will escalate to the arbitrary Sportsfields User Committee who will make a decision that will stand as final.

Rental time for the three Edmonton School Boards is managed under the [Joint Use Agreement](#). School groups have their own request process to follow for field use.

Remaining time will be available for pick up once we begin Open Season for all groups requiring additional practice time and/or game time.

Rollovers

Groups that were eligible to participate in Allocation and submitted an application to confirm their attendance may receive rollovers. Rollovers represent time slots that your group booked in the previous season, and are determined based on supply and demand.

Groups will only be able to pick up field time up to their entitlement during the appropriate allocation windows.

What is included in my group's rollover?

- Standard and Premier Fields
 - Your rollover consists of **all bookings from the previous year** except for user cancellations/no-shows, time lost to construction/field rest, and tournaments/special events.
 - Your rollover will begin on May 1st of every year; weather dependent, the season may begin earlier or later.

- Homebase Fields/Diamonds
 - As per the *Homebase Agreement*, homebase groups have priority use on the fields that they invest in and maintain (workforce, financially, field grooming and structural improvements and otherwise).
 - Homebase fields/diamonds are not included on your seasonal rollover (which can factor into conflict resolution - ex. Access to field space), as booking availability is subject to the host homebase group and their maintenance schedules.
 - External user groups are able to book at Homebase sites, as long as the booking is approved by the Homebase User Group (City Bookings department will facilitate this communication).
- Artificial Turf, Staffed Diamonds & Rectangle Fields and Tracks
 - A portion of your previous year's time will be available for rollover according to Allocation guidelines.

If field time is not included in your current seasonal rollover due to the field being closed for construction, priority will go to those groups who had booked the location in years past (prior to the construction/field closure).

Standards of Play

The Standards of Play were developed by the SFUC to determine a standard amount of hours required by each sport and age group to successfully participate in their leagues/game competition. By having this structure we ensure that groups are only allocated the amount of time that they require (for each age group) and in an attempt to limit 'hoarding' of time. This also ensures that new groups have the opportunity to grow their leagues.

Entitlement is based on each sport's Standard of Play and is adjusted based on the available facility hours.

When submitting the Allocation application form, it is very important to provide accurate team numbers in the correct categories and that those categories **add up to your total number of teams*** on the application. This will ensure that you will have enough field time for your group.

****City of Edmonton Administration and the SFUC will confirm reported registration numbers for accuracy as needed with the sport organization or governing body.***

Calculation

- Games = (number of teams X number of games) / (2 teams per game X length of game)
- Practices = (number of teams X number of practices) X (length of practice)
- Total entitlement = game total + practice total (*if applicable*)

“Turn Back” Time

Once we receive your group’s application numbers (team numbers and participant numbers), they are calculated and compared to the Standards of Play for your sport.

A total number of hours required by your group is calculated, determining your demand / entitlement. If your rollover amount (remember this is ALL bookings from your previous season license) exceeds your demand/entitlement number, you will be required to “turn back” time so that your total hours remain at or below your entitlement.

You are welcome to pick up additional time above and beyond your entitlement number during Open Season (which is typically the start of April).

The Rollover/Entitlement/Turn Back process is in place to ensure that all sport user groups have the opportunity to access sport field time to run their programs.

Conflict Resolution

If there is a conflict of two or more user groups requesting the same facility, date, and time, the groups involved in the conflict will be asked to work with one another to resolve the conflict.

If the groups in conflict cannot reach a resolution, then the conflict will be reviewed by the SFUC. The SFUC has established a three-person Conflict Resolution Sub-Committee, with one or two substitutes. If a member of the Conflict Resolution Sub-Committee is connected to one of the disputing parties, he/she will step down from the Conflict Resolution Sub-Committee for that dispute, and we will appoint a different neutral representative.

Guidelines

- The processes for resolving issues must be fair, equitable and consistent. All parties must feel that their own views and those of others have received a fair hearing and have been adequately taken into account in the outcome. Objective criteria are used to ensure that the decision is based on fair and equitable standards.
- All communication should be open and all information freely available to all involved.
- Sports field-related disputes will be managed in an efficient manner.

- The conflict resolution process is open, respectful, supportive and non-judgemental. It is completed as promptly as possible, resulting in timely decisions.
- The City of Edmonton encourages users to maximize field usage on the minimum number of fields.
- Solutions will be developed through a problem-solving approach. Decision-makers will hear both sides and focus on shared interests. What does each party want? Where is the common ground? What solutions will be most fair?
- The conflict resolution process and resulting decisions are consistent with SFUC Policy on the allocation and scheduling of City-operated sports fields.

Conflict Resolution Process & SFUC Involvement

1. The disputing parties will be e-mailed a notification of the conflicting requests and a deadline date to resolve the conflict amongst themselves.
2. If they fail to agree, the Conflict Resolution Sub-Committee will meet with the disputing parties to determine the causes of the conflict.
3. The Conflict Resolution Sub-Committee will make a final and binding decision based on the following criteria:
 - **Category of user:** Priority ranking will be based on the age of team members (Ex. Minors may be given preference on earlier time slots over adults, in an effort to align with appropriate playing time by age group); total size of each group, based on the number of teams; and/or registration as a non-profit society.
 - Where all things are equal, conflict resolution will involve consideration of the following:
 - i. Historical field/facility usage as determined by the previous year's actual use for teams within the same category of users.
 - ii. Relation from entitlement hours (e.g., furthest away)
 - iii. Whether a temporary or permanent change in the schedule is being requested.
 - iv. Willingness of one group to accept an assignment to a different facility, or another time slot at the particular facility.
 - v. Relative impact of the scheduling conflict on each of the disputing groups. Specifically, if one of the two groups has obtained satisfactory time slots for most of its total allocated field time, then preference will be given to the other group which has been less successful in finding adequate time slots for its allocated field time.

User Responsibilities and Awareness

Be a good field user

- Treat sports fields and other field users with respect, and encourage others to be respectful as well. Drinking alcohol, urinating on the field, smoking and littering are all prohibited on City fields.
- Fields are closed periodically for maintenance or rest periods, which can prevent longer closures later on. Signs are posted on closed fields. Please respect these closures.
- Saturated fields should not be used after heavy rain or in wet conditions, as damage and/or ongoing muddy conditions may result. Ask yourself:
 - Is the water pooling or running off the field?
 - When you step on the field, does water pool around your foot?

If the answer to either of these questions is “yes,” don’t use the field; it’s easier to prevent damage than to repair it. Contact the Sports Field Bookings office to request a refund if the field is in unplayable condition.

- Respect extends beyond the field. Many sports fields are located in residential neighbourhoods, so please be a polite guest: Limit unnecessary noise, and park only in areas where signs indicate parking is permitted. Not enough parking? Consider taking transit or carpooling with teammates.
- Speak up. If you see a damaged field or witness a violation, report it by calling 311.

Is your field closed?

Please visit the [Facility Notifications for Sports Fields](#) to check if fields are closed. Remember to check the field status before heading out to your game or practice.

Fields can be closed for several reasons:

- Maintenance
- Weather - using a wet or muddy field can cause serious damage
- Rest and rejuvenation - this allows the soil and grass to regenerate without the strain of constant use. Rest and rejuvenation can help prevent longer maintenance closures.

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I book a sports field?

1. To find fields in your area, use the [Neighbourhood Interactive Map](#) and filter it to sport facilities. [Sport field site maps](#) are available for a visual of the venues and inventory lists to review field information.
2. Check sport field availability on [MoveLearnPlay](#).
3. Submit a [Sports Field In-Season Request Form](#).

All booking requests will be responded to on a first-come, first-served basis.

See also: [Sport Fields Policies and Responsibilities](#).

To book the indoor field house at Commonwealth Recreation Centre, please refer to [Commonwealth Field House Booking Requests](#).

More detailed sports field information can be found at edmonton.ca/sportsfields.

How do I cancel rental time?

A group may cancel or adjust rentals by providing the City written notice at least sixteen (16) days in advance of the date being canceled or adjusted for a full refund.

- If the group fails to provide the City with written notice at least sixteen (16) days in advance of the date being canceled or adjusted, the rental fee paid/due will be non-refundable.

If no members of the group attend the booking, the rental booking will be considered a “no show” for which the rental fee will be non-refundable.

Please visit the [Facility Notifications for Sports Fields](#) to check if fields are closed due to inclement weather. Groups are expected to contact us via email no later than 12 PM (noon) on the day after their booking indicating field conditions were unplayable and we will process the cancellation refund.

What is the cancellation process for inclement weather?

Staffed Facilities

These include both grass and turf fields.

Rain/Inclement Weather

- Unless groups are notified by the Facility that their rental is canceled due to inclement weather, they are expected to show up for their scheduled time.
- Inclement Weather cancellations that you are notified of or that take place during your booking will be recorded on the Operator's Report and groups will be refunded for any unused time. For example, a thunderstorm that prevents the activity/sport from taking place at the time of the booking.

Air Quality

- Cancellation refunds will only be given if the Air Quality Index (AQI) at the time of the booking is recorded at 7 or higher by the facility on the Operations Report. AQI will be collected through this government website:
https://weather.gc.ca/airquality/pages/abaq-001_e.html.
- Cancellation refunds will not be given for forecasted air quality.

Unstaffed Facilities

These include Premier and Standard fields and diamonds that have a cost associated with them.

Rain/Inclement Weather

- Please visit the [Facility Notifications for Sports Fields](#) to check if fields are closed due to inclement weather. These updates are processed as needed at 2pm on weekdays and 10am on weekends/holidays. We recommend checking a bit after those times (e.g., 2:15pm or 10:15am) in the event Parks Operations runs into delays with the update notifications.
- Groups are expected to contact us via email no later than 12 PM (noon) on the day after their booking indicating field conditions were unplayable and we will process the cancellation refund.

Air Quality

- User groups are expected to contact us via email no later than 12pm/noon on the day after their booking, stating the air quality level (7 or higher) prevented their activity/sport from being played. We will then review historical air quality data from the day before. If AQI was recorded at 7 or higher at the time of your booking, our team will process a cancellation refund for the affected rental(s).

Important to Note: Cancellations eligible for a refund and as a result of Inclement Weather will still count towards next season's rollover.

Do I submit the Allocation application or the Tournament application for a Camp?

The application form you would fill out is dependent on the run-time of your camp:

- If your camp runs for less than one week, please submit the Tournament application.
- If your camp runs for more than one week, please complete the "Camp" section of the Sports Field Allocation application form and enter the number of teams anticipated for the number of weeks your camp will run.