

# BASEBALL/SOFTBALL FIELD USE POLICY

## Purpose

The City of Dublin recognizes the considerable benefits of providing a variety of quality recreational youth baseball and softball programs, as they promote healthy childhood development and a heightened sense of community. To maximize these benefits, the City invests in resources necessary for positive, physical, psychological and social development across a broad spectrum of baseball and softball activities.

Resource allocation is a key principle in the city's decision-making process as it supports youth baseball and softball programs for its residents. On a finite budget, the city's responsibility is to balance the use of public resources in a manner that maximizes service to the greatest number of City residents and generates optimal benefit to the overall needs of the community.

This policy establishes the guiding principles, requirements, procedures and fees that govern the allocation and use of the City of Dublin baseball and softball fields.

## Priority of Use

The city's primary obligation to accommodating youth baseball and softball activities is to first serve Dublin residents and Dublin City School District (DCSD) residents participating in the general recreational level of play for grades K through 12. In appreciation of the long standing relationship between the City and the Dublin Youth Athletics (DYA), the City recognizes DYA as the other preferred provider of general recreation youth baseball and softball leagues and activities.

Recreational baseball and softball league play is recognized by the following criteria:

- The Dublin-based organization is an Ohio non-profit corporation, has received tax-exempt status from the IRS, files all relevant tax returns, maintains compliance with IRS requirements as a tax-exempt entity and is community-focused;
- Teams are formed by the organization without the use of exclusionary tryouts and participation and provides for the inclusion of all levels of skills and abilities;
- Individual teams are coached by unpaid volunteers that may or may not have participants within the program;
- No league games are played against teams from any competitive or semi-competitive leagues;
- All league games are played within the corporate limits of the City of Dublin. (Exceptions may apply for upper age groups.)

Accommodations for non-residents, competitive and semi-competitive teams/leagues, private instructional activities, for-profit organizations, non-Dublin based organizations, competitive tryouts that are associated directly or indirectly with an organized group are considered secondary to the City's priority. The City recognizes the value of various offerings to the community; however, accommodations for secondary activities and leagues will only be made if additional resources are available providing that the needs of the general recreation activities are met. To support this principle, the City will issue permits to other organizations and teams for competitive and semi-competitive level of play as resources are available.

Requests by organizations to provide secondary types of activities for baseball or softball field use will be considered based on but not limited to affirmation of the following:



- Recreational scope (i.e.: level of play/competition)
- Residency status of participants
- Population to be served
- Local economic influence
- Exclusivity of participation
- Organizational make-up (i.e.: private, public, for-profit, non-for-profit, etc.)
- Other City-endorsed service/program schedules
- Participant fees and financial proceeds (i.e.: fund raising, profitability, etc.)
- Compliance with Federal, State and City Laws/Ordinances
- Existing City Agreements/Contracts and other commitments to community stakeholders/partners
- Facility maintenance schedules (i.e.: field management practices, renovations, etc.)
- Intended use of requested resources and potential site impacts
- Risk/Liability concerns, including background checks of organization representatives
- Costs and availability of City services required
- Compliance with City policies

## Policy

According to Ordinance 96.24 (COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES):

(A) No person in a park shall sell or offer for sale any article, privilege or service without having first obtained written permission from the Director.

(B) No person in a park shall beg, peddle or solicit for money, a privilege or a service.

All organized baseball and softball activities are applicable to City Ordinance 96.24, and require written permission for conducting such activities in City parks. Organized activities are those that are represented or affiliated with an organization, private sports business or other types of structured programs. Such activities include all baseball or softball league play (practices and games), tournaments, organized non-league related activities including, but not limited to, camps, clinics, tryouts, training sessions and other similar activities.

Specific requirements and documentation are required in order to receive the appropriate use permit. Permit applications for City of Dublin baseball or softball field use, other than common public use, shall be submitted to Community Events for consideration and approval in advance according to the application deadlines established in this policy. Permit applications can be accessed online at <http://dublinohiousa.gov/facility-reservations/sports-field-use-applications/>

## Baseball/Softball Leagues

All permit applications and supporting documentation for league play must be received no later than Feb 1 of each year. League play consists of only scheduled league games and associated individual team practices. All other uses (tournaments, camps, clinics, tryouts, structured programs, etc.) must receive a separate permit as noted in the following sections of this policy. Permits for league play will be issued on an annual basis in accordance with the City's Baseball and Softball Field Allocation and Fee Schedule for League Play, (*Appendix A.*)

The following requirements and documentation must be submitted with all league permit applications to affirm all criteria have been met by organizations to qualify for Priorities 1-4, according to Appendix A. Organizations not meeting the requirements will automatically be positioned at the Priority 5 level.

1. Organizations must maintain their primary office address within the corporate limits of the City of Dublin.



2. Organizations must provide documentation of their tax-exempt status with the Internal Revenue Service (i.e., IRS determination letter). Organizations must demonstrate compliance with tax return filing requirements by submitting the most recent federal tax filing submitted to the Internal Revenue Service (Form 990). The City reserves the right to require additional documentation to affirm non-profit and tax-exempt status as necessary. Additionally, upon request by the City, organizations must disclose financial details of all direct and indirect affiliations with individuals or organizational entities associated with financial gain resulting from the use of City property, including but not limited to foundations, sports tournaments, organizations, corporate sponsorships, etc., that are not disclosed on the organization's federal tax filing forms.
3. Organizations must secure general liability insurance for the minimum amount of \$1,000,000 (or an amount deemed appropriate by the City), naming the City of Dublin as additional insured. Organizations must notify the City of Dublin immediately if the insurance has been canceled or changed. A copy of this insurance certificate must be submitted to the City prior to any activities on City property. Failure to maintain the appropriate insurance will result in immediate cancellation of facility use.
4. Organizations must submit their policy in writing regarding the amount of expected game playing time exposure for participants.
5. Criminal background checks are required for all organization representatives, including all coaches, volunteers, staff, Board of Director members and committee chairs. The process used to conduct such tests must be approved by the City in advance. Results and documentation of all background checks conducted must be submitted annually prior to the start of each fall season, and prior to the commencement of any new individual representing the organization throughout the year. The City reserves the right to conduct an additional independent background check for any individual and may determine the eligibility of participation or representation based on the results of such checks.
6. A copy of the following documents must also be submitted with the permit application:
  - a. A copy of the organization's Code of Regulations or Bylaws and roster of its Board of Directors;
  - b. The organization's written code of conduct for athletes, spectators and coaches that stresses the importance of good character and specifies ethical obligations and sportsmanship expectations;
  - c. The organization's policy delineating established disciplinary procedures for addressing behavioral problems of athletes, coaches, officials and spectators;
  - d. The organization's emergency communication plan used by the organization to ensure that all member coaches and teams are aware of any severe weather policies or emergency advisory systems. It is the responsibility of the organization or league representative, scheduled referee(s), or permit holder to determine whether or not conditions will endanger the safety of the participants and whether or not the activity will have serious adverse effect on field conditions;
  - e. The organization's previous year's game schedules, indicating the number of games played on City fields;
  - f. Notifications of all registration fees;
7. Organization are prohibited of "sponsoring" or representing any other organization for the purpose of altering the classification or field use fee assessed to other businesses or organizations.



8. The City of Dublin reserves the right to require additional information relevant to the permit application process or to protect the interests of the City.

Organizations must inform the City of any changes to information provided on the permit application including but not limited to league participation, levels of play or other organizational modifications prior to implementation of such changes. Organizations making any such changes during the given permit period will be required to submit an additional permit application for approval. Accommodations to any such modifications are not guaranteed on City fields, and must be approved prior to implementation.

### **Baseball or Softball Tournaments:**

For scheduling purposes, preliminary schedules for baseball or softball tournaments must be received prior to January 1<sup>st</sup>, each year. The City will make an effort to accommodate the schedules as requested, however cannot guarantee all accommodations. A separate tournament permit application and supporting documentation must be received at least 90 days prior to the scheduled tournament start date. The actual number of fields permitted for use will be at the discretion of the City depending on the amount of play, field conditions or other variables that would appropriately protect field quality. All sports tournaments are subject to the requirements and City fees in accordance to the City of Dublin Sports Tournament Guidebook, (*Appendix B*).

### **Non-League/Non-Tournament Play:**

To best accommodate all other field use requests, preliminary schedules for non-league and non-tournament organized activities including, but not limited to games for independent teams from other leagues, tryouts, camps, clinics, instructional training sessions, and other organized activities should be received prior to January 1<sup>st</sup> for each subsequent year. All non-league/non-tournament activity applications and supporting documentation received after January 1<sup>st</sup> must be received at least 30 days prior to the beginning date of the activity. Permits will be considered and issued according to the City of Dublin Baseball and Softball Field Allocation and Fee Schedule for All Non-League and Non-Tournament Organization Play, (*Appendix C*), and according to field availability. Non-League/Non-Tournament permit applications can be accessed online at <http://dublinohiousa.gov/facility-reservations/sports-field-use-applications/>

### **Field Use Fees**

The City of Dublin charges non-refundable fees for each type of use as indicated in the attached Appendices A, B and C.

In order to prepare final invoices each year for league play, organizations must submit their entire team rosters including the address of every player that has participated in both the fall and spring/summer seasons (including substitute players, player additions, player eliminations, changes/additions, etc.) Rosters must be complete, with accurate residency address information, and submitted within five business days following the final fall season game. Final payments must be paid to the City before future applications will be considered for the following permit year.

Separate Payment for Field Use Fees:

- Each participant must pay the distinct fee directly. These fees are to be separated by the participant's residency status and the specific level of play (e.g., recreational, competitive, etc.).

No Modification of Registration Fees:

- Organizations cannot adjust or include field use fees in the overall registration fees for participants. The fees must be clearly listed and collected separately for field use, rather than bundled collectively into the registration fee.



#### No Redistribution of Fees Across Teams or Organization:

- The field use fees cannot be averaged or spread out across the organization or individual teams. Each participant is responsible for paying their specific field use fee.

#### Compliance with Policy:

- Failure to adhere to this policy may result in the sports organization being found in violation of the rules. Non-compliance could lead to losing access to City fields for future events or seasons.

Payment for non-league/non-tournament activities must be paid in full once the permit has been approved and prior to the scheduled activity.

### Accountability

The City of Dublin reserves the right to deny permit holders any future or existing scheduled use, assess additional fees according to the respective fee schedules, and/or require compensation for costs associated with damages to city property if it has been determined that one or more of the following has occurred:

1. Required documentation is not submitted, or inaccurate documentation/information is submitted.
2. Field use fees are not paid within the specified time frame.
3. Lack of good stewardship that contribute to unnecessary field damage.
4. Discrimination because of race, religion, color, gender, national origin, age, disability or any other basis prohibited by state or federal law.
5. Participants of the requesting organization have demonstrated dangerous and/or violent behavior towards others or among themselves, and/or participants/organizations whose literature or stated philosophy promotes hatred and/or violence.
6. Condemnation of other individuals or organizations permitted to use City baseball or softball fields, or preventing others from participating in activities offered by such organizations.
7. Subleasing or transferring of field use permit to an unauthorized entity or individual without prior approval from the City of Dublin.
8. Failure to comply with the policies and procedures outlined within this Policy.
9. Disrespectful behavior toward City staff, other park users or the general public.
10. Conducting activities on City property that are not included as the intended permitted use.
11. Unauthorized solicitation on City property of any kind, including the recruitment of individual players, coaches or teams of Dublin-based organizations for the purposes of joining another organization.
12. Any other occurrence that is deemed to be inconsistent with the intent of this policy and the parameters herein.

### Miscellaneous

Permits will be issued based on the above mentioned criteria; however, additional criteria may also be considered prior to permits being issued. These criteria include, but are not limited to, conflicts with City sponsored events, field conditions, City field maintenance programs, field capacity issues or other conflicts as determined by the Director of Parks and Recreation or designee.

All outstanding fees must be paid prior to consideration of any new applications. Permits that are approved by the City only authorize the use of available fields, and do not guarantee field availability due to unforeseen circumstances. The City reserves the right to close permitted fields at any time and for any reason.

Organizations and/or individuals receiving field use permits are responsible for all field preparations and must coordinate such with Dublin Youth Athletics. This includes all field lining, bases and any other equipment or services required to conduct the activities associated with said permit. General turf management, dragging of fields and other field maintenance shall be solely provided by City staff and will be based on the City's field maintenance schedule. Any services that are in addition to this maintenance schedule may be subject to



additional fees. It is the responsibility of the permit holder to ensure appropriate safety measures are taken. Use of fields in inclement weather or attempts to improve field conditions by digging, excessive grooming/digging, and the depositing of unacceptable fill is prohibited. The City of Dublin may seek further payment to compensate for any damages and future field use will be jeopardized. Ball diamonds and fields may only be used if field conditions are appropriate. The City of Dublin reserves the right to cancel or postpone scheduled activities based on field conditions.

All rules, regulations, codes of conduct, protocols and guidelines established by the City for the sake of administering this policy must be adhered to at all times. Behavior and conduct of individuals representing or participating in activities associated with a permit are the responsibility of the permit holder.

## **Evaluation**

It is the responsibility of the City's Director of Recreation Services to monitor and evaluate the intended outcomes of this policy annually. Based on results of such analysis the Director of Recreation Services has the discretion to appropriately modify the administrative processes and parameters herein in order to maintain the intent of this Policy.



## Appendix A

### Baseball/Softball Field Allocation and Fee Schedule for All League Play

League Play is limited to general team practices and team games during the Spring/Summer seasons. Fall season begins the third Monday in August, and ends the last Sunday in September. Spring/summer season begins the first Saturday in April, and ends the last Sunday in July. League play does not include practices or games outside of the Fall or Spring/Summer seasons, nor other activities such as camps, clinics, tournaments, tryouts and other organized activities.

	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3	Priority 4	Priority 5
	City of Dublin Programs	General Recreation	**Middle-Tier	***Select/Elite	Other
Organization Provider		*Dublin Youth Athletics Only	Dublin-Based Organizations	Dublin-Based Organizations	No Restrictions
Residency Requirement (Dublin/DSD)		Minimum 75% Residents	Minimum 75% Residents	Minimum 25% for U9 - U12 No Restrictions for U13 and Up	No Restrictions
Resident Fee Per Player/Season		Waived	\$15	\$15	\$100
School District Resident Fee Per Player/Season		\$50 (2025) \$100 (2026)	\$50 (2025) \$100 (2026)	\$50 (2025) \$100 (2026)	\$100
Non-Resident Fee Per Player/Season		\$100			\$100
Games Played on Dublin Fields		All League Games	Up to 60%	Up to 60%	TBD
League Games Travel Restrictions		Dublin Corporate Limits (Some Exceptions Apply)	Limited to Central Ohio	No Restrictions	No Restrictions
Exclusionary Tryouts		Not Permitted	Not Permitted	No Restrictions	No Restrictions
Age Restrictions		Pre-K – 12 <sup>th</sup> grade	U8 - Up	U8 - Up	No Restrictions
Team Coaching Restrictions		Volunteers Only	Volunteers Only	No Restrictions	No Restrictions

\* The City recognizes Dublin Youth Athletics as the only organization eligible to provide general recreation league play on City fields. Dublin Youth Athletics will be responsible to provide sponsorship and representation to other leagues, field scheduling, field lining and bases for other eligible organizations as necessary. Such services will be performed for a pre-set fee established by DYA. Fees for services, or changes to fees for service, must be provided to the organizations at least one year in advance.



## Appendix C

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### City of Dublin Baseball/Softball Field Allocation and Fee Schedule for Organized Activities Not Associated With Dublin-Based Permitted Leagues or Tournaments

Dublin Youth Athletics	Fee Waived
Dublin Residents (General Use*):	\$25 per field/two-hours OR \$50 per field/day
Dublin-Based, Non-Profit Organizations**/Independent Teams***:	\$50 per field/two-hours OR \$100 per field/day
Non-Dublin, Non-Profit Organizations and Teams:	\$75 per field/two-hours OR \$150 per field/day
For-Profit Organizations:	\$100 per field/two-hours OR \$200 per field/day
Field Lighting - (Fee waived for Dublin Youth Athletics)	\$35 per field/hour

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**Priority 1: City of Dublin Recreation Programs and Special Events**

**Priority 2: Dublin Youth Athletics**

**Priority 3: All Other Organized Activities**

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**\*General uses include resident and/or business non-instructional activities such as birthday parties, family outings, business outings and other such uses that are informal in nature. Fees only apply to reserved field use. Fees are waived for all other general field use by Dublin residents and are accommodated on a first-come, first-served basis.**

**\*\* Non-profit teams and organizations must submit documentation of their tax-exempt status with the Internal Revenue Service (i.e., IRS determination letter). Organizations must demonstrate compliance with tax return filing requirements by submitting the most recent federal tax filing submitted to the Internal Revenue Service (Form 990).**

**\*\*\*Dublin-based independent teams include teams that consist of a head coach that is a Dublin resident and maintain a minimum of 75% Dublin resident players. Rosters of teams must be submitted with each permit application including the names and primary addresses of the head coach and players.**



Community Baseball/Softball Field Use Policy

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**Director's Approval**

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Director of Parks and Recreation Approval:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Annually Reviewed by:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

