



Township of Egg Harbor Parks and Recreation Department

Athletic Fields Use Policy

Adopted **March 8, 2017**

Revised _____

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A. Objectives

The objectives of the Athletic Fields Use Policy shall be to:

- Provide an adequate number of athletic fields to support the Parks and Recreation and sponsored youth organizations programs.
- Protect EHT athletic fields for safety of users and to minimize wear, prevent overuse and reduce maintenance costs.
- Provide reasonable access to use of fields for NJ residents.

B. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to establish policies and procedures that govern the allocation and permitted organized use of Egg Harbor Township athletic fields and facilities, with the overall goal of fair and equitable distribution among all eligible users and to insure optimal maintenance of athletic fields and other recreational facilities owned and operated by the Township. The policy will outline who is eligible to receive permitted use of EHT fields and facilities and identifies the process used to allocate and schedule their usage. Factors to be considered in determining permission for use, as well as permission for type of use are: current capital improvements or rehabilitation, regular maintenance, extent of wear and tear to be caused by use, priority of use by group, coordination of uses, efficient scheduling, location and availability of facility.

C. Policy Review

The Recreation Commission and Recreation Director shall review this policy, all approvals/permits issued under this policy, and feedback from user groups, residents, and staff in December of each year.

D. Authority

The Recreation Commission is responsible for guiding the administrative policy of public parks and athletic fields as well as steering future development of facilities to serve the residents of Egg Harbor Township. Recreation Commissioners are appointed members that make policy decisions related to the use of fields and parks. The Egg Harbor Township Recreation Commission is granted authority via Township Code to set rules and regulations for use of parks as follows:

Township Code Chapter 165-4: The Recreation Commission shall be authorized to establish any other rules and regulations governing parks which it deems appropriate. [Added 2-18-2015 by Ord. No. 4-2015.]

E. Procedures

The Recreation Director, in conjunction with the Recreation Commission, reviews and approves all park use requests for the Township. The Parks and Recreation Department then works with its sponsored youth organizations and permitted groups to schedule the use of all fields and facilities located in Township parks.

1. Any organized sports activity must have an authorized permit for use of Township athletic fields.
2. Requests for use of Township fields must be made in writing using the Application for Use of Park Facilities form. Application forms can be obtained at the Parks & Recreation Department Office, 5045

English Creek Avenue, Egg Harbor Township, NJ 08234 or on-line at:
<http://www.ehtgov.org/Recreation/Use%20of%20Parks%20Application.pdf>.

3. All applications must be signed by the applicant. If the applicant is a sports organization or a business, the application shall be signed by an officer of the organization/business indicating his/her title or position within the organization. Applications will be accepted in-person, by mail, by email. Complete the application and return to:

Egg Harbor Township Parks & Recreation Department
5045 English Creek Avenue
Egg Harbor Township, NJ 08234
or Email to: raudet@ehtgov.org.

4. Telephone reservations will not be accepted, however, applicants may call (609) 272-8120 to check field availability prior to submitting an application. All field use applications are due to the office no later than 7 business days prior to date of use requested. The Application must be accompanied by the following documents (unless a copy is on file with the Parks and Recreation Department) before it will be reviewed:

- a) Proof of 501 (c) (3) qualification (non-profit) status: A designated organization must submit a copy of the Internal Revenue Service ruling letter designating the organization as an exempt entity.
- b) List of Board of Directors of the organization, including names, addresses, phone numbers and capacity in which they serve.
- c) Name and phone number of a contact person who maintains all registration information for the organization.

5. All applicants if approved and permitted, must ensure compliance to our rules and regulations throughout the entire use of the requested period. Each organization may have only one (1) contact person for the purpose of scheduling or canceling field use.

6. Upon receipt of the field use application, the Recreation Director will review the information provided and notify each organization as to whether field availability exists. If necessary, a scheduling meeting will be held with a representative from each organization requesting field use and the Recreation Director to best determine field use approvals.

7. An original Certificate of Liability Insurance in the amount of \$1,000,000 General Liability insurance coverage naming Township of Egg Harbor as additional insured on the policy must be provided within five (5) business days upon approval of the application. A security/damage deposit of \$250 to be held in escrow by the Parks and Recreation Department shall be required. A Hold Harmless Agreement is also required for a permit to be issued.

8. No events may begin before 8:00am or past dusk, with the exception of lighted fields that may be scheduled up to 11:00pm or as dictated by ordinance. The time stated on your application should be the actual time you wish to gain entry to the field and the time you anticipate being cleaned up and off the field.

9. The Recreation Department will issue a valid permit to each permitted organization. These permits are non-transferrable and may not be passed on to other user groups.

F. Priority of Use by Category

Permits for field/facility use are issued in priority order by category in which the organization or event is placed. Category I user/event has priority over Category II, III & IV user/event, etc. Permits

must be available for review at time of field use. EHT Parks and Recreation will make every reasonable effort to treat all organizations, teams, and individuals using township facilities in a fair and equitable manner. All parties must comply with Federal and State anti-discrimination laws. Permits for field/facility use are issued by priority as listed below and according to policies contained herein.

Category I Permit/Use

Egg Harbor Township Programs & Events

Any Egg Harbor Township sanctioned program and/or special event.

Category II Permit/Use

Recognized & Sponsored EHT Youth Sports Organizations

- EHT Baseball Association
- EHT BMX Association
- EHT Jr. Wrestling Club
- EHT Lacrosse Association
- EHT Soccer Club
- EHT Street Hockey Association
- EHT Youth Organization
- EHT Travel Basketball Association
- EHT Youth Softball Association

Category III Permit/Use

EHT School District

Programs, events, and/or activities officially sanctioned, coordinated and sponsored by the Egg Harbor Township School District.

Category IV Permit/Use

Egg Harbor Township Non-Profit Organizations / EHT Church Groups / EHT Boys & Girls Scout Groups

Non-profit organizations, entities, individuals or groups for the purpose of providing recreational services primarily to Egg Harbor Township residents, must show proof of non-profit certification. Organization address of record is an EHT address. Team rosters must show 75% or higher EHT residents.

Category V Permit/Use

Non-Egg Harbor Township Non-Profit Organizations

Non-profit organizations, entities, individuals or groups for the purpose of providing recreational services, must show proof of non-profit certification. For all teams with fewer than 75% EHT residents.

Category VI Permit/Use

Independent Organizations

Organizations, entities, individuals or groups for the purpose of providing recreational services who do not operate as a commercial enterprise or business and can't provide verifiable proof of operating on a non-profit basis as defined herein.

Category VII Permit/Use

Commercial

Organizations, entities, individuals or groups for the purpose of providing recreational services that are operated as a for-profit commercial enterprise.

- To qualify as a Non-Profit organization in Category IV or V above, the organization must be registered as a not-for-profit corporation with the State of New Jersey. Non-Profit Organizations are those organizations that have evidence of Federal 501 c filing and state non-profit status.
- Priority is given within a particular sport's designated "season." In-season sports have equal status to each other; out of season sports have equal status to each other.
- Bargaintown Park Baseball Field has been declared by the Recreation Commission as a park facility to serve adults in the Township and surrounding area, priority may be given to adult groups superseding the Category rankings stated above.

G. Field Scheduling Process & Calendar

The first step to securing a facility is to complete a Facility Use Application form. The allocation of fields and facilities will be determined by the Recreation Director according to the priority of use established in section F above and provided the criteria listed is met.

1. The Parks and Recreation Department may schedule fields and facilities at any time for Township sponsored programs, events and activities.
2. Category II Applicant's use of parks forms for the spring and summer season (Mar 1 – Aug 31) is to be submitted at least 48 hours prior to the January meeting of the Recreation Commission. Field use approvals for Category II will be voted upon at the January meeting.
3. Category II Applicant's use of parks forms for the fall season (Sep 1 – Nov 30) is to be submitted at least 48 hours prior to the June Meeting of the Recreation Commission. Field use approvals for Category II will be voted upon at the June meeting.
4. All Category III – VII Applicants may submit a use of parks facilities applications no more than 60 days prior to start date of use. Additionally, applications for use of fields April 1 – August 31 will be accepted up to 48 hours prior to the February Recreation Commission meeting. Permits will be issued for groups that apply according to our category rankings and any policy contained herein. Applications for use of fields September 1 – November 15 will be accepted up to 48 hours prior to the July Recreation Commission meeting. Permits will be issued for groups that apply according to our category rankings and any policy contained herein.

5. Field use applications may be submitted past the dates stated above, no later than 7 business days prior to date of use requested and will be considered based on remaining field availability and meeting all guidelines of this policy.

H. Restrictions

1. Field Use permits will be issued to all applicants in categories III-VII between the dates of April 1 - November 15 annually. No use outside of these dates for above category groups will be allowed.
2. All EHT fields will be permitted for use a maximum of 6 days a week to ensure they receive some rest and reduce wear and tear.
3. Athletic fields may not be scheduled for more than 8 hours of use in a day. The Director of Recreation may make exception to this rule in case of tournament play. During the months of July and August, all fields will be permitted for use no more than 6 hours daily.
4. The Township will leave field use times open and un-scheduled for informal use by public.

To minimize field wear and maintenance and ensure the safety of participants, fields may be retired from play after each season to allow rehabilitation/regrowth of the turf. The Recreation Commission, EHT Public Works, and any Township Official may close any EHT field for the upcoming season based upon a review of field conditions and required maintenance to ensure playability. The Township may cancel individual activities on any given day depending on weather and current field conditions. In case of permitted date of use canceled due to weather or field conditions, the Director of Recreation will assist the organization in obtaining one alternate date at no additional cost provided the date of facility use is not booked previously by any other permitted group.

I. Permit Fees

Egg Harbor Township Athletic Fields

Category I, II, III are permitted for use at no charge.

Category IV-VI

Field use	\$30 per hour / 3 hour block min.
Field use w/ Lights	\$60 per hour / 3 hour block min.

Category VII

Field use	\$100 per hour / 3 hour block min.
Field use w/ Lights	\$150 per hour / 3 hour block min.

K. Permits

Athletic Field Use Permits should be carried by the permittee at all times, during scheduled use of the athletic fields and must be presented upon request. These permits are non-transferable and may not be passed on to other user groups. All field users must adhere to their designated activity, times, locations and dates of assigned use. Authorized permits will only be distributed after all required documentation has been submitted. All organized sports activity must have an authorized permit for use of Township athletic fields.

L. Field Closure for Maintenance

To maintain the quality of Township athletic fields and to allow for appropriate rest and repair of turf areas, mandatory field closure periods will be identified by EHT staff, either by site or by field.

The closed site or field will be identified by posted signs and/or fencing and the organization's contact person will be notified. Consequences for not adhering to the field closure periods will result in the following:

- 1st Offense Written warning to the league representative. Security deposit will be forfeited and remain with the Township.
- 2nd Offense Suspension of field use by the offender. A fine of \$500 will be imposed and must be paid to Parks and Recreation or any future permitted use would be canceled.
- 3rd Offense Hearing before the EHT Recreation Commission with a potential loss of the field use permit for the organization.

M. Inclement Weather Policy

Athletic fields may be closed due to inclement weather or saturated conditions. If a field is to be determined closed or deemed unplayable by Township staff on weekdays, notice will be sent to the appropriate league/organization contact person via email by 2:00 pm that day. It is the responsibility of the organization's contact person to notify any and all coaches of the field closure. At later weekday times and weekends, each organization is required to cancel its permitted activity if injury may result to participants or if damage to the playing surface or facility may occur. Users must notify the Director of Parks & Recreation, or designee, if they have closed the field so other users questioning whether to close their fields can be so advised. Our standard that we will hold organizations to is as follows: *If there is any doubt, the field should be closed and all activities canceled.* Consequences for not adhering to the Inclement Weather Policy will result in the consequences for offenses stated above in Section L.

Field use is prohibited in the following circumstances:

- It is closed for renovation or repair
- Water is standing on the field
- Soil is frozen
- The soil is wet and "spongy"
- Grass can be dislodged from the field easily
- Steady rain is falling
- A lightning/electrical storm is occurring
- The field is deemed unplayable by Public Works and/or Parks and Recreation staff

N. Facility Use Rules & Regulations

All users must adhere to the rules and regulations as per all EHT Ordinances related to use of parks.

Conduct Rules

A. All managers, coaches, or persons in charge of a group using the fields will be responsible for the conduct of all participants, spectators and others connected with the activity, including visiting teams and opponents. Group users must inform their participants of the conduct rules under this Field Policy. Users must clean up after themselves (i.e., water bottles, etc.) and managers must inspect the facilities.

- B. Warm-ups for the next scheduled event must be performed so as not to interfere with existing event and so as not to endanger the welfare of all participants, spectators and facilities.
- C. Use of alcoholic beverages or controlled substances of any kind, use of profane, loud, threatening, insulting, indecent and abusive language is prohibited.
- D. Smoking is prohibited at all fields/facilities.
- E. All trash must be placed in proper receptacles. Users are expected to leave the facility in the same or better condition in which it was found.
- F. No field user may put down lines, significantly or permanently alter, or make any changes to a park facility. Users are allowed to perform basic field prep such as raking a batter's box prior to a game.

Appendix