



FIELD ALLOCATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Mission - To provide the citizens of Keene with quality community services and amenities including a park and cemetery system, balanced environmental stewardship and diverse programming to inspire and support active lifestyles for all ages.

I. Summary

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Outline allocation procedures for authorized use of athletic fields in the City of Keene
- Ensure that fields are used for recreational functions that meet the needs of the community
- Set clear policies, rules, and regulations for field use both by community-based youth sports leagues, and by non-community based sports leagues.
- Ensure that fields receive proper best practice maintenance standards.

Due to the limited number of available facilities, the Parks, Recreation and Facilities Department has established criteria for field use and will monitor proper use of allocations and authorizations. Increased demand on fields creates an increased strain on the City's financial resources. Therefore, the City may charge fees in order to recover public costs to operate, maintain, repair, improve, supervise, and administer the use of athletic fields.

Keene Public Elementary Schools and municipal parks that have athletic field space are available for use. Parks and Recreation reserves the right to make any decisions regarding sports programming and facilities that are in its best interests, and the best interests of the residents of the City.

All organizations will be required to meet the following minimum standards to utilize the City of Keene athletic fields:

1. Organization has a single point of contact (name, mailing address, phone number, and e-mail address) for all field use – preferably the Area Chair or League President – that will verify all rules and regulations concerning field use are distributed to and clearly understood by all teams/coaches
2. Organization verifies that nationwide background checks (with established standard disqualifiers) are completed and passed a minimum of every three years by all coaches, officers and board members
3. Organization verifies that all Board Members and Coaches complete “Know and Tell” training provided by Granite State Children’s Alliance. This course is designed to educate staff working with children on identifying warning signs of potential abuse and/or neglect and what steps to take in reporting to the appropriate authorities once a concern is recognized. Further, it defines the mandated reporting laws in accordance with State of New Hampshire Section 169-C:29. <https://knowandtell.org/contact/ecourse/>
4. Organization verifies that all coaches comply by completing a Concussion Awareness training program through the CDC called HEADS UP to Youth Sports: Online Training <https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/training/index.html>
5. Organization must provide proof of liability insurance in an amount no less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence, with the City of Keene and Keene School District named as additionally insured

II. Tiers of Service

Approved sports leagues will be placed into one of the following Tiers, prioritizing field allocation from lowest Tier to highest:

Tier 1 – Recreational City-Sponsored

- Includes all use scheduled by Keene Parks and Recreation programs.
- Tier 1 will not pay a fee for use of fields or use of lights.

Tier 2 – Recreational Non-City Sponsored

- Includes recreational leagues not co-sponsored by the city, but still serving a specific geographic area of the city or the Keene School District.
- Registration is open regardless of skill level or ability to pay, no one is turned away, there is a no-cut policy, and everyone plays.
- Examples: Youth Baseball League, Youth Softball League, Pop Warner/AYF Football, Recreational Soccer Leagues, Recreational Lacrosse Leagues, Adult Softball Leagues, Rugby leagues, etc.
- Tier 2 will not pay a fee for use of fields*, but will pay a fee for use of lights. Please refer to Section VIII – Lighting Fees, for charges and payment process.
- *Field fees will apply for weekend tournament play, outside of league play and playoffs.

Tier 3 – Advanced/Elite

- Includes leagues offering above-recreation level play, serving an area larger than one town, and/or competing for state/region/national/world championships.
- Also includes individual independent teams that participate in tournaments only (not leagues).
- Examples: Teams/leagues formed based on skill level and not all players can participate, All-Star teams and programs, travel/AAU/select/independent teams, for-profit organizations, camps, clinics, weekend tournaments, etc.
- Tier 3 will pay a fee for all use of fields and lights. Please refer to the Field Rental Policies and Procedures available at www.keeneparks.com.

III. Eligibility Requirements

League President or Area Chair, or other authorized agent, must complete and sign a Verification of Field Allocation Eligibility form (provided by the City) confirming that their sports league organization meets and complies with all of the applicable requirements as set forth below. This form must be submitted with the organization's seasonal field request on an annual basis (see Section IV).

A. Tier 1 and Tier 2:

In order to be approved by Parks and Recreation for Tier 1 or Tier 2 field allocation, the community youth sports leagues organization must meet all of the following criteria:

1. Organization is recognized as a nonprofit by the State of New Hampshire and/or receives a tax exemption from the Internal Revenue Service under Section 501(c)(3)
2. Organization has an established, all-volunteer Board of Directors
3. Organization serves the City of Keene and/or the Keene School District, organizes teams via a neighborhood/community concept, and/or has league boundaries approved by a parent organization
4. Organization accepts all players regardless of playing ability, forms teams via an equitable draft process (no "cuts"), and has established Mandatory Play rules for all participants
5. Organization is financially solvent, has an annual operating budget, and is able to provide financial statement(s) summarizing the previous year's activity upon request
6. Organization operates under an established Constitution, Bylaws, and member Codes of Conduct
7. Organization verifies that a minimum of 80% of all registered players are Keene residents, should the minimum not be met, an additional \$1500 fee will apply.
8. Organization must be represented by one board member, officer or designee at the annual field allocation meeting

Parks and Recreation reserves the right to audit all of the required information, and upon request all information must be provided to the Recreation Center at 312 Washington Street within 5 business days. Failure to meet the above criteria or provide requested information may result in denial of the application or loss of previously allocated fields.

IV. Allocation Process

The allocation of fields will follow the guidelines stated below:

1. All approved sports organizations will be contacted by the Parks and Recreation Department in January (spring season) and May (fall season). An organization must first be approved by meeting the Eligibility Requirements in Section III and providing required documentation.
2. The organization's Area Chair, League President, or authorized agent, shall submit the following to be received by February 1 (spring season), May 1 (summer season), June 15 (fall season), or no later than four weeks prior to the requested start date of field use:
 - A. An Application For Field Use Form (provided by the City)
 - B. A Verification of Field Allocation Eligibility Form (provided by the City)
 - C. Proof of liability insurance in an amount not less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence, with the City of Keene and Keene School District named as additionally insureds by written endorsement.
3. Requests for additional use, programs or facilities not covered by the initial application must be submitted as a new application. Additional fees may apply.
4. After the specified deadline to receive requests, and after the requests are approved, Recreation staff will begin the process of assigning fields, dates and times to the various sports organizations based on the priorities in this policy.
5. Fields will be allocated in a fair and equitable manner, and in the best interest of the City. However, the City reserves the right to revise field allocations in accordance with section XI, below. Allocations will be conducted using a consistent set of criteria including but not limited to:
 - A. All sports organizations will be assigned a Tier of Service as outlined in section III.
 - B. Space/time will be allocated using the Sports Participation Guidelines outlined in section V.
 - C. Parks and Recreation administered programs have first priority of field use.
 - D. Traditional sports seasons have priority:
 - Spring (April 1 through June 15) – baseball, softball, lacrosse, rugby.
 - Summer (June 16 through July 31) – recreational baseball and softball
 - Fall (August 1 through October 25) – soccer, football, rugby.
 - Requests for out-of-season play will be reviewed after allocations for traditional season sports. Additional charges may apply for out-of-season allocations.
 - E. No elementary school field will be allocated before 4pm (Monday through Friday).
 - F. It may not be possible to grant all field allocation requests.
 - G. No field use is assigned during the winter months.
 - H. Past history, previous allocation/use of fields, payment history, prompt return of requests for information, and compliance with established Conditions of Use, will be taken into consideration for both approval, allocation and appeal process.
 - I. Keene School District Public School events always have first priority on all school fields. When a school notifies us of closure dates not listed on the authorization documents, assigned user group(s) will be notified.
 - J. Parks and Recreation reserves the right to cancel a specific or entire allocation to accommodate the needs of any City-sponsored event.
6. Once the allocation process is completed, field authorization documents will be distributed to each organization's Authorized Agent.

7. Immediately following registration, any deviation to the projected teams/age groups (noted on the Application for Field Use) will be shared and communicated by the organization to the Parks and Recreation Department.
8. Sports organizations must submit as part of the application process a complete practice schedule to the Recreation Center Office on forms provided by the City (broken down by fields/days/times/teams), no later than 14 days after the first authorized date of field use.
9. Game schedules must be submitted to the Parks and Recreation Department at least 10 days before the first scheduled game.
10. Assigned field use will be verified by Parks and Recreation staff. If an allocated field(s) is not used as assigned three times by the designated organization, the Parks and Recreation Department reserves the right to reassign, cancel and adjust field allocations accordingly. Organizations will be notified prior to reassignment and will have an opportunity to an Appeal Process (Section XV: Appeals Process)
11. The Parks and Recreation Department reserves the right to make adjustments to the field allocation process as needed to address recognized needs or resolve conflicts.

V. Sports Participation Guidelines

For community sports organization field allocation purposes, and as part of a basic level of service to be provided to the community, Parks and Recreation will use the National Standards for Youth Sports. The Standards were established by the 2007 International Youth Sports Congress sponsored by the National Alliance for Youth Sports (NAYS), and revised in 2017.

The standard participation guidelines below provide a level of physical activity that promotes an interest in sports and exercise, ensure equitable space/time for each team, and provide consistency between teams and associations. They also create a balance of play time with academic and/or other extracurricular activities, while still providing skill development and a positive youth sports experience.

1. Each age group is allocated a set number of practices and games per week. The week runs Sunday through Saturday. The following matrix indicates the maximum participation and allocation guidelines. Practice schedules will be compared to Participation Guidelines (and assignments may be adjusted) to ensure equitable distribution of field inventory.

Age Group	Practices + Games per week, per team		
	Time per day	Days per week	Total time per team per week
6 and under (Developmental)	1 hour	2	2 hours
7-8 (Instructional)	1 hour	3	3 hours
9-10 (Organizational)	1 hour	3	3 hours
11 and up (Skill Enhancement)	1.5 hours	3	4.5 hours

2. When school is not in session (i.e. April vacation, summer vacation, etc.), additional practice time may be permitted up to 150% of the above table.

VI. Conditions of Field Use

Each sports organization will be held responsible for compliance with the following policies. Misuse of a park or school field, or the failure by any sports organization or individual member to comply with these regulations is cause for revocation or denial of existing authorizations and/or future applications.

1. **All official use of elementary school and park fields is by Authorization only.** Sports organizations without authorization, or that cannot produce their organization's field authorization documents, will be asked to vacate the premises.
2. Coaches must have a copy of their organization's field authorization documents with them at all times. The field authorization documents must be available for inspection at any time at the request of School and City staff, or Police.
3. The organization's president or designated agent or liaison is responsible for ensuring that coaches receive their organization's field authorization documents and understand the documents must be on site and presentable during field use.
4. The organization's president, agent or designated liaison is responsible to enforce the rules and regulations regarding the conduct of teams while using authorized facilities.
5. No assignment of field use authorization is allowed under any circumstance. Assignment of fields may result in revocation of all authorizations indefinitely.
6. Any use of fields without authorization or interfering with another authorized user may result in the revocation of all authorizations indefinitely.
7. Parks and Recreation must be notified immediately if an allocated field is no longer needed, or if there is a change in the organization's field use schedule.
8. Parking at schools is permitted only in designated parking areas.
9. Parking in grassy areas at schools and municipal parks is prohibited. Vehicles are restricted to paved roads and parking lots. Improperly parked motor vehicles may be towed at the owner's expense.
10. Smoking, use of tobacco products, e-cigarettes, drugs and alcoholic beverages are prohibited on school property (including parking lots).
11. No alcohol permitted on park fields, unless designated by City Ordinance.
12. Teams must police grounds for trash daily after use, and remove the trash.
13. Field authorization documents give approval for use of outdoor areas only.
14. Please adhere to all closure dates listed in the Notes section of field authorization documents.
15. Organizations are responsible for adhering to Field Maintenance Guidelines (Section VII).
16. Area Chairman/League President or authorized agent must submit a specific schedule (and fee, if applicable) to the Parks and Recreation Department for any field lights to be used. Please refer to Lighting Fees (Section VIII) for charges and payment process.
17. While spring field allocations may begin in April, fields will not be regularly maintained prior to April 10. In fall, fields will be regularly maintained beginning September 1.
18. Replace turf divots at the end of each day to help re-root grass.
19. No tarps or material that may damage the grass may be placed on the turf.

20. Do not use fields during or after a heavy rain, or when wet or muddy.
21. Do not overcrowd fields by scheduling multiple practices or games in reserved areas. Allow a distance between fields for safe passage of spectators and participants. All participants shall be required to comply with the terms, conditions, recommendations and restrictions that may be applicable to the use of the fields by participants as stated in the Executive Orders of the Governor of the State of New Hampshire issued under the declared COVID-19 State of Emergency, by the Center for Disease Control, or by any authorized health authority.
22. Multi-Purpose Field use, especially practices, should be conducted in such a way that the action takes place on different sections of turf, thus reducing excessive damage in one area. Rotate use, and when possible, stay off fringe or bare areas to limit erosion and further damage.
23. All vendor and food sales on City Property require prior approval from Parks and Recreation. Additionally, all food sales and food vending operations require a valid Food Service Permit approved and issued by the City of Keene Community Development office.
24. Any equipment left on site must have prior authorization of Parks and Recreation and must be safely stored or secured. The City of Keene and Keene Public Schools are not responsible for any equipment that may be damaged or cause personal or property damage/injury.

VII. Field Maintenance Guidelines

Each assigned user group will be held responsible for complying with the following Field Maintenance Guidelines:

1. Holes and uneven areas on ball fields must be reported to the Parks and Recreation Department for repair, and **NOT** attempted by the user. This includes batter boxes, pitching rubber areas, and any other area needing attention.
2. Fields may be groomed with appropriate method of dragging only. **NO** vehicles of any type or small utility carts are allowed.
3. Mowing of City park or school fields is not permitted.
4. All trash and debris must be removed from the field, dugout, infield, outfield, and fence areas.
5. Damages discovered to City property **MUST** be reported in a timely manner to Parks and Recreation. This includes fences, player benches, bleachers, trash cans, or anything else needing attention.
6. Structures or improvements of any kind **CANNOT** be built or installed without prior approval from Parks and Recreation.
7. School programs and events take priority on school property— organizations will be notified.
8. If the City or the school district cancels a program or event due to inclement weather, it is recommended that each organization and its members refrain from using the fields.
9. Pushing/spreading water is only allowed within the infields. **DO NOT PUSH water into the outfield.**
10. Appropriate bases and base pins are placed as needed for that fields events.
11. Parks and Recreation will maintain and apply all field lines for foul lines and boundaries.
12. All field improvements must be approved in advance by Parks and Recreation. This includes home plates, batting cages, temporary fencing, fill material, sheds/equipment storage units,

etc. Stockpiling material onsite is prohibited unless pre-approved by Parks and Recreation.

13. **NO** chemical applications allowed. This includes all pesticides.
14. All goals must be secured to the ground or some type of pre-approved structure at all times to prevent tipping and must maintain a safe working condition.
15. User groups are responsible for excessive use or damage to City fields, equipment, and property as determined by the City. If additional maintenance is required after an activity (in excess of routine services/time), the assigned user group may be charged accordingly. Failure to pay for additional maintenance caused by excessive use or damage may result in the immediate loss of existing field allocations/permits, and/or the refusal of future allocation requests.

VIII. Lighting Fees

Tier 2 organizations will be charged a fee of \$50 per night for use of field lights. Prior to any lights being programmed, League President, designee or authorized agent must submit a formal schedule (form provided by the City) and payment to the City of Keene. Light schedules and payments must be received no later than the 15th of each month for the next month's lighting needs.

- Example: schedule/payment for May light needs will be due by April 15
- Example: schedule/payment for September light needs will be due by August 15

IX. Inclement Weather Policy

The City reserves the right to cancel or suspend field authorizations when field conditions could result in injury to players or cause damage to fields. Authorizations may also be cancelled when the health and safety of participants is threatened due to impending conditions, including but not limited to: heavy rain, poor air quality, high winds, excessive heat, lightning, tornadoes, tropical storms, hurricanes, winter storms, or pandemics.

During inclement weather, Parks and Recreation staff will assess the playability of all City owned and designated school fields to determine if use will occur. The Parks, Recreation and Facilities Director or designated representative has the authority to close any/all fields. In addition, Parks, Recreation and Facilities has the authority to close municipal park fields as determined by the City.

In order to evaluating playing conditions, groups should employ the playability criteria used by City staff and take into consideration the current and future quality of the turf.

Groups witnessing misuse of fields by other scheduled or unscheduled users are requested to contact the Recreation Center office at 603-357-9829.

X. Violations

Violations of this policy may result in the immediate loss/revocation of existing field allocations, the denial of future allocation requests, charges for the cost of any modification/repair to a field or facility related to the violation, and other actions as determined by the City. The Parks and Recreation Department will provide written notice of any violation and the action taken as a result of the violation.

The organization may appeal this decision as outlined in XV: Appeal Process.

XI. Cancellation

Parks and Recreation reserves the right to cancel any Authorization for Field Use due to the following:

- Conflict with a City-sponsored or School District-sponsored league, program, activity, or event
- Maintenance needs/issues
- Overuse of a field
- Unsafe conditions
- Violations of these Policies and Procedures per Section X above
- Failure to supply necessary information during a Field Allocation audit request

The City will make good faith efforts to provide advance notice to the sports organization to reschedule at an alternate location. In the event of an emergency, or when only short or no notice can be provided, groups must cooperate with the cancellation so as not to risk loss of field allocation privileges. The City is not obligated to provide alternate fields.

XII. Additional Supervision/Security

The City has the right to require a field user to provide additional park personnel, security, medical, or police protection when deemed necessary by the City. Any resulting expenses/costs will be the responsibility of the field user.

XIII. Traffic and Parking

It is the organization's responsibility to alleviate parking and traffic issues. The assigned sports organization may be required by the City to provide volunteers to direct participants and spectators to designated parking areas.

Please note that some neighborhood streets adjacent to park are residential and may not have available parking.

XIV. Sponsorships

The Parks and Recreation Department Corporate Sponsorship Program policy outlines third party sponsorships in 6.0. These sponsorship policies do not apply to teams and leagues that often solicit their own sponsorship and enter into private agreements for uniforms. However, any other public display or advertisement on City property shall be provided by the Parks and Recreation Department. For any questions regarding this policy, please contact the Recreation Division at 603-357-9829. The City reserves the right to deny any request that is not in compliance with the requirements of the policy.

XV. Appeals Process

Should the organization disagree with the designation of Tier of Service, denial of an application and the reassignment of, or cancellation of, a field allocation or a violation notification from the Parks, Recreation and Facilities Department (Collectively "Administrative Decision"), they may file an appeal through the following process.

1. The appeals board will be made up of the Parks, Recreation and Facilities Director, Assessing Director, and the Community Development Director and/or his/her designee ("Appeal Board").
2. The appeal of the Administrative Decision must be filed in writing with the Director of Parks, Recreation and Facilities or designee within 36 hours of the date of the decision stating the basis of the appeal, or filed on the first business day after the Administrative Decision, whichever is earliest.
3. The Appeal Board will schedule a meeting with the authorized representative(s) of the organization to occur within 5 days at the Recreation Center, at which time the organization may present its position to the Appeal Board.
4. The Appeal Board shall issue a written decision based on a majority vote affirming, reversing, or

modifying the Administrative Decision as it deems is appropriate.

5. The decision of the Appeal Board is final.

XVI. Questions

For any questions regarding this policy, please contact the Parks and Recreation office at 603-357-9829.

XVII. List of Facilities

A list of the Elementary School and City park fields covered by this policy is below. * = lighted fields

PARKS, FIELDS & OUTDOOR FACILITIES AVAILABLE FOR RENT THROUGH KPRD

*WHEELOCK DURLING FIELD – 101 Park Ave 03431
*WHEELOCK O'NEAL FIELD – 101 Park Ave 03431
*WHEELOCK BAMBINO FIELD – 101 Park Ave 03431
*WHEELOCK MIKE ROGERS FIELD – 101 Park Ave 03431
WHEELOCK NGM FIELD – 101 Park Ave 03431
LEGION HANNA FIELD – 797 Court Street 03431
LEGION UNDERWOOD – 797 Court Street 03431
WOOD STREET CLEVELAND FIELD – Wood Street 03431
RUSSELL PARK – Carpenter Street 03431

SCHOOLS ALLOCATED BY RECREATION CENTER (603-357-9829)

FULLER SCHOOL FIELD 1 – Fuller School, Elm Street 03431
FULLER SCHOOL FIELD 2 – Fuller School, Elm Street 03431
SYMONDS FIELD – Symonds School, 79 Park Ave 03431

MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL FIELDS

Middle School and High School fields are not allocated by Parks and Recreation.

- Tier 1 organizations will submit Middle School field use needs with their seasonal facility requests. The Parks, Recreation and Facilities Department will submit a field request to the school on the Association's behalf, and communicate approval/disapproval to the Area Chair.
- Tier 2 and Tier 3 organizations wishing to use Middle School or High School fields must contact the school directly. President submits the request to the Keene School District Facilities Department. Questions can be directed to 603-352-8919.