



<b>Title:</b>	<b><i>Gymnasium Allocation Policy</i></b>		
<b>Policy Owner:</b>	<i>Community Services</i>	<b>Approved By:</b>	<i>Community Services Committee</i>
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## 1.0 DIRECTIVE STATEMENT

All indoor gymnasium and court allocations shall be managed in accordance with this policy to ensure equitable access, efficient use of facilities, and alignment with the Town of Grimsby's strategic priorities.

## 2.0 DIRECTIVE PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to define the process for the fair, equitable, transparent, and consistent allocation of municipally owned and operated gymnasium spaces in a manner that maximizes community benefit and supports the effective use of Town assets.

## 3.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to all user groups and individuals seeking multi-week or recurring rentals of indoor gymnasium or multi-use court spaces owned, operated, or managed by the Town of Grimsby, including:

- Single and double gymnasiums
- Multi-purpose sport courts

This policy does not apply to:

- Ice pads and arenas
- Outdoor fields, courts, or parks
- Meeting rooms, halls, or community spaces governed under separate facility-use policies
- Single-use or occasional public bookings.
- Long-term lease or license agreements approved by Council
  - Such agreements may still be subject to the principles and intent of this policy, where applicable to their operation or community use.

## 4.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- **Equity & Access:** All residents and local organizations shall have fair opportunity to access Town owned gymnasiums.



- **Transparency:** Processes and decisions will be clearly communicated and consistently applied.
- **Accountability:** Users are responsible for proper use, payment, and adherence to Town policies (including R-Zone and municipal by-laws).
- **Efficiency:** Allocations will balance community demand with responsible facility management to maximize facility use and revenue to reduce operating costs.
- **Inclusivity & Affordability:** Allocation decisions consider barrier reduction and equitable access.
- **Collaboration:** Town staff will work cooperatively with user groups to resolve conflicts and optimize schedules.
- **Sustainability:** Allocation decisions will support long-term community benefit and asset preservation.

## 5.0 DEFINITIONS

**Community Sport Organizations (CSO) – Adult** – A user group or association that provides majority adult (over age 21) activities and meets all the requirements of Section 8, Governance and Residency Requirements.

**Community Sport Organizations (CSO) – Youth** – A user group or association that provides majority youth (under age 21) activities and meets all the requirements of Section 8, Governance and Residency Requirements.

**Emerging Group** - A new or developing sport, activity, or organization that does not yet meet CSO criteria but demonstrates growing participation or clear community demand for a program or sport not currently offered by the Town or other CSO.

**Good Standing** – An organization or person that is not involved in any legal proceeding (litigation or prosecution) with the Town or does not have any outstanding debts or payments owed to the Town.

**Local** – An organization with at minimum 80% Grimsby residency or offer a service that benefits local residents that is not offered by another local provider.

**Permit** – Formal rental agreement issued by the Town’s Community Services Department.

**Prime Time** – Monday–Friday 5:00–10:00 p.m.; Saturday–Sunday 8:00 a.m.–10:00 p.m.

**Resident** – Means a person who pays property taxes to the Town or a person whose primary residence is a dwelling that pays property taxes to the Town.



**Season** - The defined allocation period for gymnasium scheduling, consisting of Fall/Winter (September–March) and Spring/Summer (April–August).

**Town** – means the Corporation of the Town of Grimsby

**User Group** - An organization, school, business, or collective of individuals that submits a request for ongoing or recurring use of Town gymnasium space.

## 6.0 ELIGIBILITY

To be considered for inclusion in the allocation process, groups must:

1. Submit a complete Gymnasium Allocation Request Form by the bi-annual deadline defined in Section 11.1
2. Hold, or be willing to obtain, \$2 million Commercial General Liability Insurance, naming the Town of Grimsby as Additional Insured. A valid Certificate of Insurance must be provided before a permit is issued
3. Meet the governance and residency requirements associated with their allocation priority level.
4. Be in Good Standing with the Town.
5. Provide all required supporting documentation (e.g., roster, governance list, schedule) as outlined in Section 8.

## 7.0 ALLOCATION PRIORITY

Gymnasium time shall be allocated in accordance with the seasonal process outlined in Section 11.0, with allocations prioritized in the following order:

1. Town Programming and Events (e.g., drop-in basketball, fitness, camps)
2. CSO Youth
3. CSO Adult
4. Local School Daytime Programming (public and not-for-profit)
5. Local non-profit groups that do not meet CSO criteria.
6. Commercial Programs for Residents
7. Non-Resident or Commercial Users

## 8.0 GOVERNANCE AND RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS

*As this is a new policy for a new community space, community sport organizations that do not yet meet all eligibility requirements will be granted a one-time, one-year transition period from the effective date of this policy to achieve full compliance.*

To achieve Community Sport Organization Status (adult and youth), the organization must:



- Be a not-for-profit entity, either incorporated or governed by a volunteer board with a constitution that supports democratic decision-making.
- Have an elected Board of Directors with at least five members.
- Maintain a clearly defined membership with a minimum of 25 voting members.
- Maintain current governance documents (constitution and bylaws), or for groups with annual budgets under \$20,000, approved terms of reference that outline operating procedures and voting rights.
- Demonstrate that at least 80% of participants are Grimsby residents, or that the organization provides a unique service not otherwise available locally.
- Provide an annual membership or player list for residency verification and monitoring participation trends.
- Maintain valid liability insurance and provide a Certificate of Insurance.
- Be affiliated with a Provincial or National Sport Organization (PSO/NSO), or where none exists, demonstrate adherence to recognized safety and coaching standards.
- Be in Good Standing with the Town.
- Submit an annual financial statement.
- Not duplicate services offered by an existing recognized CSO.
- Maintain a public website that includes executive contacts, governance documents, and financial statements.

## 9.0 STANDARD LEVELS OF PLAY

User Groups are expected to operate within reasonable allocation thresholds based on registration numbers and sport-specific standards (e.g., typical hours per team per week).

These standards serve as the Town's baseline for equitable distribution of facility time and ensure allocations reflect participation levels and recognized norms for each activity.

Standard Levels of Play are developed in consultation with user groups and informed by participation data, community demand, and best practices from comparable regional municipalities and sport organizations. These standards may be updated periodically to remain fair, consistent, and responsive to evolving needs.

In the event of new requests for time, changes in membership, or the introduction of an emerging group, the Standard Levels of Play will serve as a key consideration within the review process defined in Section 11.3 (Adjustments to Supply and Demand).

## 10.0 SEASONAL ALIGNMENT AND OFF-SEASON REQUESTS

Gymnasium allocations will prioritize activities that align with the sport's traditional season. For example, gymnasiums are primarily intended for winter or indoor sports (e.g., basketball, volleyball, badminton, pickleball) during the fall/winter period.

### 10.1 Off-Season Requests:



Off-season use requests from outdoor field users may be accommodated only after seasonal indoor sport requests have been fulfilled and subject to:

- Availability of remaining time after in-season sports are scheduled
- Demonstrated community demand or developmental purpose
- Fair distribution among user groups
- Adherence to overall allocation priorities

Rationale: Ensures that in-season sports receive adequate access while supporting reasonable off-season development.

## 11.0 ALLOCATION PROCESS

### 11.1 User Submission Process

Gymnasium time will be allocated **bi-annually**, following the Town's two primary program cycles:

- **Fall/Winter Season:** September – March
  - **Spring/Summer Season:** April – August
1. *Application Deadline:* Requests must be submitted by **May 1** for the upcoming Fall/Winter season and **November 1** for the Spring/Summer season.
  2. *Application Form:* Groups must complete the online Allocation Request Form and include all required documentation (e.g., insurance, governance list, proposed schedule, and participant data).
  3. *Preliminary Review:* Town staff will verify eligibility and completeness of submissions in accordance with this policy.
  4. *Consultation Period:* Applicants may be contacted to discuss scheduling preferences, conflicts, or adjustments prior to finalization.
  5. *Permit Issuance:* Final permits are issued once allocations are confirmed, insurance is received, and all applicable fees are paid.

### 11.2 Internal Allocation Process

The Town will use the previous season's finalized schedule as the baseline for each new allocation cycle. User groups can generally expect to receive the same hours and time blocks as the prior season, subject to adjustments required under this policy, including Standard Levels of Play, participation trends, seasonal alignment, and supply-and-demand considerations.



### 11.2.1 Transitional Note – Fall/Winter 2025–2026 Only:

Because the new gymnasiums in the Major Refrigeration Peach King Centre (MRPKC) will open partway through the 2025–2026 Fall/Winter season, the timelines and full process outlined in Section 11.1 cannot be applied. For this season only, the Town will establish an interim schedule for the remaining months of the 2025–2026 Fall/Winter season based on user submissions, expressed needs, and operational feasibility, recognizing that many groups may already have commitments at other facilities. This interim schedule is intended to maximize initial utilization of the new gymnasiums while applying the priorities of this policy to the extent possible and will not serve as the baseline for future allocation cycles. The first full application of this policy, and the establishment of the initial baseline schedule, will occur for the 2026–2027 Fall/Winter season.

*Gymnasium time will then be allocated in the following order:*

1. **Town Programming:** Town-operated programs, drop-ins, camps, and community events are placed first in the schedule.
2. **Baseline CSO Allocations:** Eligible Community Sport Organizations (CSO Youth, then CSO Adult) will receive their prior season’s schedule as a starting point. Adjustments may be made based on the factors outlined in Section 11.3.
3. **Other Recurring Rentals:** After CSO allocations, recurring rentals from other eligible user groups (schools, local non-profits, resident commercial operators) are scheduled.
4. **Schedule Confirmation:** The Community Services Department will review and finalize the schedule prior to permit distribution.
5. **Public Access:** Remaining time will be released for occasional or one-time community bookings through the Town’s online system. The Town’s intent is that not all available hours are pre-allocated to support flexible, short-term, and spontaneous community use.

### 11.3 Adjustments to Supply and Demand

The Town recognizes that available gymnasium time and community demand may vary from season to season. Where demand exceeds or falls below available supply, allocations will be reviewed and adjusted to ensure fair and efficient use of facilities.

When demand exceeds supply, the Town will consider several factors, including:

- Historical precedent and participation data
- Standard Levels of Play (Section 9) as a guiding benchmark
- Balance between youth and adult access, and prime versus non-prime hours
- Efforts to support emerging or developing programs
- Overall community benefit and equitable distribution among users



When demand decreases or additional time becomes available, the Town may reallocate or release hours to support new or growing groups, improve public access, or strengthen program diversity.

#### 11.4 Scheduling Windows

To support fair and age-appropriate access, the Town will prioritize youth programming in the earlier evening hours. Generally, youth activities will be scheduled before 9:00 p.m., while adult programming will typically be accommodated after 9:00 p.m., or earlier once youth scheduling needs are met. These guidelines ensure that scheduling reflects the needs of different age groups while maintaining equitable access across all users.

### 12.0 EMERGING SPORTS AND NEW USER GROUPS

New user groups may be considered if they serve an unmet community need and meet eligibility criteria. Access will be drawn from unallocated or unused time first, before consideration reallocation from existing users.

#### 12.1 Non-Competition

New organizations will not be eligible for allocation priority if the programming offered directly duplicates or competes with services already provided by an existing, recognized CSO. The Town will assess overlap based on sport, age group, program format and residency served.

### 13.0 PAYMENTS AND PENALTIES

Rental fees are established annually under the Town's Rates and Fees By-law, and payments must be made according to the permit schedule. Late payments may be subject to interest and/or permit termination. User groups with outstanding balances from previous allocation periods will forfeit their priority status under this policy. Non-use, sub-leasing, or unapproved trades of permitted time will result in termination of the permit and may lead to the loss of future booking privileges.

### 14.0 CANCELLATIONS AND RETURNED TIME

User groups may adjust or return requested time during the allocation process without penalty. After seasonal permits are issued and accepted, groups may return up to 3% of their seasonal allocation, to a maximum of 20 hours (whichever is less) without charge. Approved trades between user groups or returns that are immediately offset by a new booking, will not count toward this allowance. All return requests must be submitted in writing with a minimum of 10 days' notice. Returned time beyond the permitted amount will remain fully billable at the approved rental rate and may be considered when evaluating future allocation requests or historical priority status. All returned hours become the property of the Town to reassign at its discretion. The Town may cancel bookings when required for maintenance, safety, special events, or operational needs, with notice provided where possible.



## **15.0 EQUIPMENT AND SETUP**

All setup and takedown activities must be completed within the booked time. Only approved equipment may be used, and floor protection along with non-marking footwear is mandatory. Any damage to equipment or floors will be billed to the permit holder. Allocation and access are subject to available facility supervision and staffing levels.

## **16.0 TOURNAMENTS AND SPECIAL EVENTS**

Tournaments and special events offer community and economic benefits, but they require additional planning across the entire facility. As a result, tournaments are not part of the regular seasonal allocation. Annual tournaments that occur on the same weekend each year may appear in the draft schedule but must still be confirmed annually.

New tournament requests generally require 12 months' notice and will only be considered when the building can safely support them. Approval depends on gym availability, parking capacity, spectator volume, staffing, and other events occurring in the MRPKC. The Town may limit the number or size of tournaments to reduce disruptions to regular programming.

All requests must be submitted in writing and include dates, required spaces, and any special needs. Standard rental fees, insurance, and any additional staffing or setup costs apply. Activities such as raffles, food vendors, food trucks, alcohol service, and merchandise sales require separate approval under the Town's Special Event Guidelines. The Town may deny or modify requests where operational or safety concerns exist.

## **17.0 DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND APPEALS**

The Town encourages early communication and collaboration among user groups to resolve conflicts. Staff may facilitate discussions to review competing requests and explore fair and efficient solutions. If a conflict remains unresolved, the Director of Community Services will conduct a formal review using the Town's assessment criteria, including residency, public benefit, organizational standing, compliance, demonstrated need, and past use of allocated time. A written decision will be issued and is final. Appeals will only be considered where a procedural error or misapplication of this policy can be demonstrated; appeals based on allocation outcomes or preferences will not be accepted.

## **18.0 POLICIES AND STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

All users must comply with applicable Town by-laws and policies, including:

- Rates and Fees By-law
- Municipal Alcohol Policy
- R-Zone Policy
- Facility Rental Terms and Conditions