



Town of Lexington

Recreation and Community Programs Department

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Playing Field and Related Facility Permit Policy

The Town of Lexington (the Town), through authority granted to its Recreation Department, hereby adopts the following policy concerning the use of the Town's playing fields and related facilities. Lexington Fields and Facilities are in the public domain and do not necessarily need a permit for use. However, a legally issued permit does take preference over drop-in use on any site or playing surfaces. ***Regular meetings of a group of individuals are considered organized use and do necessitate the issue of a Field Permit.***

Permitted Uses of Fields:

- Organized or regular use of the Town's playing fields by groups shall require a permit.
- When two or more applicants are on an equal footing and applying for the same space, priority will be given to the traditional in season sport, outlined as follows:
 - Fall Season – Football, Field Hockey, Soccer
 - Spring Season – Baseball, Softball, Lacrosse, Track and Field
 - Summer Season – Baseball, Softball
- Allocations will be based on availability, scheduled renovations, and turf control measures, implemented by the Recreation Department and the Public Grounds Department. (Simply because a field looks open and available does not mean it will be permitted. It may be scheduled for renovation or have been renovated with controls that are not readily visible, or may have been deemed by the Recreation Department and Public Grounds Department to be at its maximum use level in light of its condition). The Town will make a concerted effort to schedule field renovations and turf maintenance after the athletic season is over.
- In addition to the tier (which will be issued pursuant to the priority tier system and other factors as described below) to which a permit holder belongs, consideration will be given to a Lexington Based Sports Organization (LBSO) that has been a permit holder at a site in the past. As a general rule, a permit will be renewed provided the holders have conducted themselves in accordance with the conditions described in this policy. **This does not guarantee a permit from season to season.** Items that will weigh in final decisions will be the past history an organization has developed with the Recreation Department, length of time an organization has been at a particular site, how good a neighbor the LBSO has been to the surrounding neighborhood (i.e. parking, no alcohol use), condition the field is left in after user is finished for the day (i.e. trash), and the ability of the group to conform to the rules and regulations of the Recreation Department.
- Other than Tier 1 and Tier 2, applicants that wish to use a second field during a season will only be considered for a second site based on availability after the season permits have been issued. In general, we have space for non Tier 1 or 2 applicants to have only one field per season.
- Applicant or the responsible adult who is designated on the permit form shall be present at all times when a field allocated to them is in use.

- Payment is expected prior to receiving the permit (with the exception being Lexington youth organizations that pay the per participant rate). **Payment by check or cash is accepted.** No future permits will be issued to a group or organization until all outstanding fees are paid.
- Reallocation or subletting of fields by a permit holder is strictly prohibited. If permitted fields are going unused, the unused dates and times may not be assigned to non-permitted users and are to be turned back to the Recreation Department for allocation to other users.
- Unless specifically requested and approved by all applicable Town Departments and Boards, it is understood that the function/activity to be held is not a fundraiser, that no admission is to be charged, that no tickets will be sold or collections taken, and that no items will be sold.
- Any violation of the permit's terms, conditions, and/or limitations shall be grounds for immediate revocation of the permit. No refund of the permit administrative fee will be granted and future applications for permits submitted by such team, group, or organization may be denied.
- By submitting an application, all applicants agree to conform to all Town policies for playing fields and related facilities use.

Checklist for permit application: **Consideration will not be given until the following conditions are met:**

1. Completed application with signed acknowledgement of policy statement.
2. Associated rosters signed by organization or league authenticating residency requirements for Tier 2, 3, & 4 users. A copy of participant's driver's license or other proof of residency may be required.
3. A copy of the organization's insurance certificate. It must be for a minimum of \$1,000,000 general liability coverage and the Town must be named as additionally insured.
4. Any organization or entity that accepts volunteers and provides activities or programs to children 18 years of age or younger must provide the Recreation Department with written documentation that the entity or organization performs a CORI check on all volunteers, as required by Massachusetts General Law. This must be on your organization's letterhead and signed by the President:

Chapter 385 of the Acts of 2002, "An Act Further Protecting Children", was signed into law by Governor Jane Swift in November 2002. The law imposes several new requirements, including *"...any entity or organization primarily engaged in providing activities or programs to children 18 years of age or less or that accepts volunteers, shall obtain all available criminal offender record information from the criminal history systems board prior to accepting any person as a volunteer."*

- The permit holder(s) must be in possession of the permit at the playing field and/or related facility, and be prepared to produce the permit upon proper request by representatives of the Recreation Department, or any Town official, including the police. Failure to produce a valid permit when requested is grounds for expulsion from the playing field or facility, and such further action as the Recreation Department may determine to be appropriate under the circumstances.
- Once a field permit has been processed, no refunds will be given. A credit may be issued due to inclement weather contingent upon timely notification of a cancellation (for lighted fields, the organization must contact the Recreation Department by 3:30pm the day of the cancellation) and at the discretion of the Recreation Department. The Recreation Department will (Monday – Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) communicate, by means of email, its website, and/or its Program Information and Cancellation Line (781-698-4810), playing field conditions when a field is closed due to wet or unfavorable conditions. **If the weekend forecast calls for rain, the Recreation Department, in conjunction with the Public Grounds Department, has the authority to close all athletic fields for the weekend.** If this decision is made, an attempt will be made to notify all field permit holders via email and/or phone on Friday afternoon. **Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the field permit holder to check with the Recreation Department to see if a field has been closed by calling (781) 698-4810.** After regular Recreation office hours, it is the responsibility of the permit holder to determine whether or not an activity can be held. If the decision to cancel is made after regular Recreation office hours, the permit holder must contact the Recreation Department the next business day in order to be eligible for a credit.

- After a field permit has been processed, **each change** made to the permit, whether it be date, location, or time, will result in a \$10 administrative fee being assessed to the permit holder.
- Each non-profit sports organization must be in compliance with all state and federal regulations.

Permits will be issued in the following priority:

Tier 1 Priority Use:

- Recreation Department Sponsored Programs.
- School Department Use:
 - Lexington High School MIAA sanctioned athletic team (e.g., soccer, softball, lacrosse, baseball, football, field hockey, tennis, track and field, etc.) games and practices.
 - Lexington Middle School athletic team (e.g. soccer, softball, lacrosse, baseball, football, field hockey, tennis, track and field, etc.) games and practices.
 - Lexington Public School Physical Education classes.
 - Lexington Public School/PTA special events such as “Walk for the Arts”, school fairs, etc.
- These priorities override any permit issued by the Recreation Department. School Dept. sport & special events take priority over all previously issued permits. Conflicts will be resolved on a case-by case basis.

Tier 2 Priority Use: (Must have 95% Lexington Residents)

- Lexington Based Youth Sports Organizations (i.e. Little League, Babe Ruth baseball, Lexington United Soccer Club, Lexington Youth Lacrosse who pay a per participant/per season fee)
- A Lexington resident with at least 95% residents can apply for a single use one-day permit (example: birthday party, pick-up game, etc.).

Tier 3 Priority Use: (Must have minimum of 60% Lexington Residents)

- Lexington Based Youth Sports Organizations (a team that participates in regional leagues – MAPLE, Summer District Select, etc. will be considered provided that no fewer than sixty percent (60%) of the officially rostered members of such teams (e.g., 6/10, 7/11, 8/12, 9/14, 10/16, 11/17, 12/18 etc.) are residents of the Town.
- Lexington based adult sports league*. League membership must have 60% residency.
- Season permit for organized pick-up games/adult league games & practices - must maintain 60% residency.

Tier 4 Priority Use:

- Lexington Based Youth Sports Organization*, Lexington based businesses, private or charter schools, and groups of residents who cannot meet the 60% residency requirement. Such requests will be accommodated on a case-by-case basis.
- Season permit for organized pick-up games/adult league games & practices and does not meet 60% residency.

Tier 5 Priority Use:

Private Clinics, camps, tournaments, or other special uses shall not be eligible for a playing field and/or related facility use permit unless such use is sponsored by the Recreation Department, Lexington Public Schools, or on a case-by-case basis a recognized Lexington Based Sports Organization. Any playing field and/or related facility use permit issued for such use shall be subject in all instances to the terms, conditions, and limitations of the Town Department or agency’s sponsorship, including permit priority.

- Please be advised that rosters will be verified.
- Organizations cannot sub-lease the fields or sell their field permit to another group.
- A Lexington-based league must consist of a minimum of 4 teams to be classified as a league.
- **Field Permits are not guaranteed from season to season.**

Application Process:

- Permit applications will be accepted by the Recreation Department beginning the first Monday in January. Starting and ending dates are approximate and depend upon weather/field conditions. The Recreation Department and the DPW Public Grounds Department will set the start dates.
- Sessions: 1. Spring - approximately April 1 – June 21
2. Summer - June 22 – August 16
3. Fall - August 17 – November 30 (or sooner if fields are closed)
- **Single Use field requests** will be on a first-come basis. Tier Categories and fees apply to single use requests. No refunds will be issued, but a credit will be awarded in the event of rain cancellation. Permit holder must call the Recreation Office no later than the day following the rain out to receive this credit.
 - A schedule of permit fees is listed at the end of this document. The Recreation Department will issue a permit/invoice based upon the Tier Category the organization falls under.
 - An application requesting use of any Lexington High School Field may need the additional approval of the LHS Athletic Director. The Recreation Department shall make this determination and notify the applicant if such approval is required.
 - All completed permits received by the Recreation Department on or before the seasonal (i.e., spring, summer and fall) deadline will be considered shortly following the seasonal deadline. Permits received after the seasonal deadline will be considered only if there remains playing field availability. Following is an approximate timetable for submission of playing field and related facility applications and issuance of permits:

	Spring Season	Summer Season	Fall Season
Application Period Opens	December	January	January
Applications Due By	January 9	April 24	July 1
Permits Issued By	March 15	June 1	August 15

It is the responsibility of each permit holder to submit requests in writing to the Recreation Department.

- Once a permit is issued, use of the playing fields and related facilities covered by such permit is strictly limited to the terms, conditions, and limitations contained in the permit. These shall include, without limitation, all applicable Town ordinances and such further rules and regulations as may be promulgated and in effect from time to time by the Town and/or the Recreation Department. Field permits may be revoked for:
 - Use of alcohol, tobacco, and other controlled substances at field sites
 - Use of wet fields (defined below)
 - Excessive litter
 - Cars parked on fields and other grass areas
 - Use of foul and abusive language
 - Failure to adhere to Town ordinances
- In addition, the following Rules/Regulations must be enforced at the 3 multi-purpose synthetic fields at Lincoln Park:
 - No staking any object into the synthetic turf
 - No chewing gum is allowed (gum may damage the synthetic turf)
- Appropriate notices will be posted and maintained by the Recreation Department and the Public Grounds Department at all playing fields and related facilities that may be under renovation.

- **Field permit holders are not allowed to practice or play games on any field, including the three turf fields at Lincoln, under the following conditions:**

1. When there is standing water on the field
2. When the ground is water-logged and “squishy”
3. When the footing is unsure and slippery
4. During any thunderstorm, lightning event, or heavy/downpour rain.

Field permit holders will be held responsible for the repair of any field on which they played in wet or unfavorable conditions and caused damage to the field, regardless of whether or not the field was closed by the Recreation Department. If field damage occurs, the Public Grounds Department will determine what and how the field needs to be repaired and the permit holder will be responsible for paying for all field damage. In addition, failure to pay for repairs and/or causing field damage will result in revoking all future permit use.

- Field permit holders are not allowed to practice or play games on any snow-covered field and **are not allowed to remove snow from any field, including the three turf fields at Lincoln.**
- Youth organizations should consider younger participants when making the decision to play.
- Goals and other equipment ancillary to the use of Town playing fields and/or related facilities may be made available. If made available, the following would apply:
 1. The permit holder may use such goals or other equipment but shall do so at his own risk.
 2. The permit holder shall be responsible for using such goals and other equipment in accordance with such rules and regulations established by the Recreation Department.
 3. The permit holder shall be responsible for all damages or loss of such goals or other equipment resulting from the use thereof.
 4. The permit holder is responsible to ensure that all ancillary equipment that is used is returned to its original location on the site after each use.
 5. Only soccer goals with wheels are allowed on the synthetic turf fields at Lincoln Park.
- **There is no guarantee that the field permitted will be lined. Field lining is not included in the administrative permit fee. If the league or organization requires lines, it is the responsibility of the permit holder to make arrangements. Users are not permitted to perform any type of maintenance (including lining) on Lexington fields without the approval of the Superintendent of Public Grounds.**
- In submitting an application for a permit under this policy, the applicant:
 1. Agrees that he/she will abide by the rules of the Town, the Recreation Department and their representatives and designees;
 2. Recognizes the possibility of physical injury associated with use of playing fields and related facilities. Therefore, in consideration for the Town and the Recreation Department accepting his/her/its application for a playing field and related facility use permit, the applicant hereby releases, discharges, and/or otherwise indemnifies the Town, its several departments and agencies (including the Recreation Department), any sponsoring LSB0, and their respective officers, directors, coaches, committees, employees, attorneys and associated personnel, including the owner of playing fields, facilities and/or equipment utilized under, or in any way connected with any field use permit which may be granted hereunder, of and from any claim, demand, action, cause of action, suit or liability arising as a result of the applicant’s use of any Town owned playing field or related facility.
- The Recreation Department reserves the right:
 1. To require a police detail or DPW overtime, where deemed necessary by the Recreation Department, as a condition of any permit being issued. The cost of such a police detail or DPW overtime shall be borne by the permit holder, at the established detail rate.
 2. To revoke permits issued for violation of Policy, Town Ordinance, or Recreation Department Rules and Regulations.