# City of Hilliard
# Recreation and Parks Department
## Athletic Field Policy
*Last Revised January 2026*

**Purpose**

The City of Hilliard Recreation and Parks Department recognizes the considerable benefits of providing a variety of quality recreational youth sport programs, as they promote healthy childhood development and a heightened sense of community. To maximize these benefits, the City and School District invests in resources necessary for positive, physical, psychological and social development across a broad spectrum of sporting activities.

Resource allocation is a key principle in the decision-making process as it supports youth sport 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
School District 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 Hilliard City and School fields.

**Priority of Use**

The City of Hilliard Recreation and Parks Department's primary obligation is to accommodate youth activities is to first serve Hilliard School District residents participating in the general recreational level of play for grades K through 12.
Recreational league play is recognized by the following criteria:

- The Hilliard 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 Central Ohio area. (Exceptions may apply for upper age groups.)

Accommodations for non-residents, competitive and semi-competitive teams/leagues, private instructional activities, for-profit organizations, competitive tryouts that are associated directly or indirectly with an organized group are considered secondary to the City of Hilliard Recreation and Parks Department's priority. The department 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 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 all 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/School-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/School Agreements/Contracts/MOU's 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/School services required
- Compliance with City/School policies

**Policy**

(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 of Recreation.

a. Concessions sales will be expected to provide a temporary food permit from Franklin County Public Health, along with a concession stand rental fee 1 month prior to rental date.

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

All organized sporting activities are applicable 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 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 Hilliard baseball or softball field use, other than common public use, shall be submitted to the City of Hilliard Recreation and Parks Department for consideration and approval in advance according to the application deadlines established in this policy. Permit applications can be accessed through the department by calling 614-876-5200.

**Leagues**

All permit applications and supporting documentation for league play must be received no later than March 1 of each year. League play consists of only scheduled league games, associated individual team practices, and post season playoffs. 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 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 Tier 1-4, according to Appendix A. Organizations not meeting the requirements will automatically be positioned at the tier 5 level.

1. 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 of Hilliard Recreation and Parks Department 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.

2. Organizations must secure general liability insurance for the minimum amount of $1,000,000 (or an amount deemed appropriate by the City), naming City of Hilliard Recreation and Parks Department, City and School as additional insured. Organizations must notify City of Hilliard Recreation and Parks Department 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 cancelation of facility use.

3. Organizations must submit their policy in writing regarding the amount of expected game playing time exposure for participants.

4. 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 of Hilliard Recreation and Parks Department 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.

5. 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;

6. Organizations are prohibited to "sponsor", "sub-lease" or represent any other organization for the purpose of altering the classification or field use fee assessed to other businesses or organizations. Any act of doing so will result in review of contract, subject to immediate termination.

7. City of Hilliard Recreation and Parks Department 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 Hilliard Recreation and Parks Department 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/School fields and must be approved prior to implementation.

**Tournaments:**

For scheduling purposes, preliminary schedules for tournaments must be received prior to February 1st , and no earlier than October 1st each year. The City of Hilliard Recreation and Parks Department 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 Hilliard Recreation and Parks Department Tournament Guidebook, (Appendix A).

**Field Use Fees**

The City of Hilliard Recreation and Parks Department charges non-refundable fees for each type of use as indicated in the attached Appendices A.

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 game of the season. Final payments must be paid to the City before future applications will be considered for the following permit year.

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

**Ohio House Bill 47**

In compliance with Ohio House Bill 47 that went into effect on October 24, 2024, all user groups will be required to maintain records of coaches and league officials that have completed a sudden cardiac arrest training that is approved by the Ohio Department of Health. User groups must also create an emergency action plan for the use of external defibrillators during their reservation. The City of Hilliard reserves the right to request copies of the user group's emergency action plan and sudden cardiac arrest training certificates at any time.

As of January 1, 2026, The City of Hilliard currently maintains publicly accessible AEDs at the following parks.

- Roger A Reynolds Municipal Park
    - Located at the restroom/concession pavilion between the ball diamonds.
    - Located next to the Pickleball and Tennis Courts at the restroom building.
- The Hilliard Athletic Complex
    - Located at the restroom pavilion.
- Father Rodric J. DiPietro Park
    - Located at the restroom building.
- HOSA Field Park
    - Located at the storage building.

The user group must provide their own external defibrillator and trained coaches/league officials if reserving an athletic field at a City of Hilliard Park that is not listed above to be compliant with Ohio House Bill 47.

**Accountability**

City of Hilliard Recreation and Parks Department 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 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 City of Hilliard Recreation and Parks Department.
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 City of Hilliard Recreation and Parks Department 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 Recreation Director or designee.

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

General turf management, dragging of fields, chalking and lining (excluding practices) and other field maintenance shall be solely provided by City staff and will be based on the City's field maintenance schedule and field condition. 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. City of Hilliard Recreation and Parks Department 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. City of Hilliard Recreation and Parks Department reserves the right to cancel or postpone scheduled activities based on field conditions. This may change based on staffing levels for the Recs and Park Department.

All rules, regulations, codes of conduct, protocols and guidelines established by the City of Hilliard Recreation and Parks Department 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. City of Hilliard reserves the right to limit field usage, regardless of season, to rest fields and accommodate the number of parking spaces.

**Evaluation**

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

# Appendix A

**Tier 1 – City of Hilliard Recreation & Parks Department**

City of Hilliard Recreation & Parks Department classes, special events and leagues have first priority over field usage.

**Tier 2 - City of Hilliard Recreation and Parks Department Resident Organizations for Recreational Sports**

School affiliated and organizations or groups that provide a School District-wide opportunity to all youth to participate in a sport/recreational activity. These groups do not have selective criteria for choosing players and make the opportunities for play as economically affordable as possible. Tier 2 teams are granted first rights to all field requests, as long as they do not interfere with internal usage, and the City of Hilliard Recreation and Parks Department makes every effort to accommodate their needs. This type of organization makes considerable efforts to assist the City/School in the upkeep, maintenance and/or renovation of City/School facilities. The City of Hilliard recognizes the following organizations, and only the following organizations, as Tier 2 organizations.

Hilliard Baseball Association, Hilliard Girls Softball Association, Hilliard Ohio Soccer Association, Northwest Football Club, Hilliard Optimist Club Youth Sports, Hilliard Lynx Field Hockey.

- Tier 2 Organizations may reserve field space for an entire season, or up to 12 weeks in advance
- *A fee of $10 per child per season will be collected to go towards Field Sports Improvements.*

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| Ball Diamond Fee | Waived |
| Rectangular Field Fee (Grass) | Waived |
| Rectangular Field Fee (Turf) | Waived |
| Cricket Field Fee | Waived |
| Light Fee | Waived |
| Security Deposit | $300 - Refundable |
| Residency Requirement (Hilliard City School District) | 95% Residents |

**Tier 3 - Club, Travel, and Competitive League-Play that is sponsored by Tier 2 and primarily serve City of Hilliard Recreation and Parks Department.**

Organizations are sponsored and supported by Tier 2 organization. Organizations that have had a long-standing presence in the community in providing sporting activities for youth on a more competitive level. These organizations have a selection criteria and process that could exclude players based on ability and/or number of players/teams. This type of organization makes

considerable and consistent efforts to assist the City and Schools in the upkeep, maintenance, renovation of City and School facilities and/or with purchasing of equipment.

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| Ball Diamond Fee | $35 per field/2 hours<br>$175 per field/per day (Tournament Rate) |
| Rectangular Field Fee (Grass) | $55 per field/day<br>$350 per field/per day (Tournament Rate) |
| Rectangular Field Fee (Turf) | $150 per field/2 hours<br>$500 per field/per day (Tournament Rate) |
| Cricket Field Fee | $25/day<br>$100/day (Tournament Rate) |
| Light Fee | $50 per field/2 hours (Ball Diamond)<br>$50 per field/hour (Turf Fields)<br>$75 per field (Ball Diamond Tournament Rate)<br>$100 per field (Turf Field Tournament Rate) |
| Security Deposit | $300 - Refundable |
| Residency Requirement (Hilliard City School District) | 95% Residents |

**Tier 4 - Club, Travel, and Competitive League-Play that primarily serve Hilliard School District Residents and do not have a Tier 2 sponsor and City of Hilliard Residents (General Play).**

Organizations have had a long-standing presence in the community in providing sporting activities for youth on a more competitive level. These organizations have a selection criteria and process that could exclude players based on ability and/or number of players/teams.

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| Ball Diamond Fee | $40 per field/2 hours<br>$200 per field/per day (Tournament Rate) |
| Rectangular Field Fee (Grass) | $100 per field/day<br>$400 per field/per day (Tournament Rate) |
| Rectangular Field Fee (Turf) | $275 per field/2 hours<br>$550 per field/per day (Tournament Rate) |
| Cricket Field Fee | $40/day<br>$150/day (Tournament Rate) |
| Light Fee | $50 per field/2 hours (Ball Diamond)<br>$50 per field/hour (Turf Fields)<br>$75 per field (Ball Diamond Tournament Rate)<br>$100 per field (Turf Field Tournament Rate) |

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| Security Deposit | $300 - Refundable |
| Residency Requirement (Hilliard City School District) | 90% Residents |

**Tier 5 - Club, Travel, and Competitive League-Play that do not serve Hilliard School District Residents and do not have a Tier 2 sponsor and Non-City of Hilliard Residents (General Play).**

Individuals, organizations or groups that provide sporting activities for individuals or teams. These groups are offered the same playing fields as Tier 2, 3, & 4 organizations, if vacancies exist and are scheduled after all Hilliard Recreation & Parks and Hilliard City School, Tier 2, Tier 3, and Tier 4 requests have been completed.

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| Ball Diamond Fee | $100 per field/2 hours<br>$400 per field/per day (Tournament Rate) |
| Rectangular Field Fee (Grass) | $500 per field/day<br>$1,500 per field/per day (Tournament Rate) |
| Rectangular Field Fee (Turf) | $500 per field/2 hours<br>$2,000 per field/per day (Tournament Rate) |
| Cricket Field Fee | $100/day<br>$300/day (Tournament Rate) |
| Light Fee | $50 per field/2 hours (Ball Diamond)<br>$75 per field/hour (Turf Fields)<br>$100 per field (Ball Diamond Tournament Rate)<br>$200 per field (Turf Field Tournament Rate) |
| Security Deposit | $500 – Refundable<br>$1,000 – Refundable (Tournament Rate) |
| Residency Requirement (Hilliard City School District) | No Restrictions |

- The City of Hilliard Recreation and Parks Department updates tiers annually to ensure proper field usage is being met. Organizations seeking placement on one of those tiers must submit their request by January 1st of each year.

Field permits are required to reserve a field for league practice, any organized activity and/or a game(s)/trainings that are advertised, or marketed. Permits for short-term practices or games outside of league play are limited to 2 hours for a duration of up to two (2) weeks from the date you make the first booking. A processing fee, usage and extra fees may apply. Permits are issued on an 'as is' basis. Permits must be available on-site for review by Parks personnel. All players play at their own risk. All field users, permitted and non-permitted are required to check the ball field hotline if field conditions are the least bit questionable.

## ADDITIONAL FINES AND DAMAGE FEES

**Unpermitted League Play:** Unreported league play may be punishable by a fine of $100 plus the cost of the unpermitted hours and any applicable application/processing fees. Multiple offenses may result in loss of access to Hilliard City and School fields.

**Play during Field Closures and Rain Outs:** Permitted organizations that play during field closures may be assessed a fine of $100 plus damage fees and may have their field use permit revoked at any time.

**Play during or after Rain:** Permittees who play during or immediately following inclement weather may be assessed a fine of $100 plus damage fees and may have their field use permit revoked at any time.

Playability can be determined by the user on-site by using these simple criteria:

- Calling the Program and Ball Field Hotline at (614) 470-5413 whenever you're in doubt after 4 pm. If a rainout has been called play is not permitted. If the hotline has not been updated, please use the following guidelines to determine playability:
    - If stepping on the infield produces a ½ inch deep or greater water-filled footprint, or when running produces the same result, play is not permitted.
    - If there is any doubt, the rule is to follow this policy. Failure to follow this policy can result in fines, assessment of damage charges and revocation of current and future permits.