

Exeter Parks & Recreation Department Field Allocation Policies & Procedures

I. Summary

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Outline reservation and rental procedures for authorized use of athletic fields in the Town of Exeter
- Set clear policies, rules and regulations for field use both by community-sponsored youth/adult sports leagues, community-based youth/adult sports organizations, non-community based youth/adult sports leagues and competitive sports leagues
- Ensure that fields receive proper maintenance and follow best practice standards
- Outline fee structure

Due to the limited facilities available in Exeter and high demand for these facilities, the town of Exeter and Exeter Parks & Recreation Department have established the following policies and procedures for proper field use and allocation. Extensive use of Exeter's athletic facilities creates a burden on the town's financial resources, therefore, the town may charge fees in order to recover costs to operate, maintain, repair, improve, supervise and administer the use of athletic fields. Exeter Parks & Recreation reserves the right to make any decisions regarding programming that are in its best interests, and the best interests of the residents of Exeter. *EPRD can supersede this document for the interest of the Parks & Recreation Department.*

All organizations will be required to meet the following minimum standards to utilize the Town of Exeter athletic facilities:

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. The point of contact will be responsible for verifying all rules and regulations regarding field use are distributed and clearly understood by all teams/coaches.
2. Organization verifies that nationwide background checks (with established standard disqualifiers) are completed and conducted at a minimum of every 1 year for all coaches, officers and board members.
3. Organization verifies that all coaches watch, understand, and follow protocols in the "Proper Field Maintenance" video that is provided by EPRD.
4. Organization must provide proof of liability insurance with required amounts: General Liability/Bodily Injury/Property Damage (combined) \$300,000/\$1,000,000 with additional personal injury of \$300,000 and the Town of Exeter listed as an additional insured.

II. Tiers of Service

Groups will be placed into one of the following tiers, prioritizing field allocation from lowest tier to highest.

Tier 1 - Town-Sponsored Programs and Events

- Includes all use scheduled by Exeter Parks and Recreation programs
- Tier 1 will not pay a fee for use of fields
- SAU16 Schools (subject to costs incurred)
- See Eligibility Requirements (Section III page 3)

Tier 2 - Recreation Non-Town Sponsored

- Includes recreational leagues and groups not sponsored by the Town of Exeter, but still serving a specific geographic area of SAU16 that meets the needs of residents
- 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
- Tier 2 will pay a fee (see Fee Structure in section XVI page 11)
- See Eligibility Requirements (Section III page 3)
- **Please note: If a Tier 2 league also offers Travel/Advanced/Elite teams, any game, tournament and/or practice scheduled for their Travel/Advanced/Elite team(s) will fall under the Tier 3 or Tier 4 Field Allocation Policy and Fee Structure AND a separate Field Use Application must be submitted.**

Tier 3 - Travel Teams

- Includes above recreational leagues and groups not sponsored by the Town of Exeter, but still serving a specific geographic area of SAU 16 that meets the needs of residents
- Players are nominated to team
- 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)
- Organization has an established, all-volunteer Board of Directors
- 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
- Organization operates under an established Constitution, Bylaws, and member Codes of Conduct, including yearly background checks for all volunteers
- Tier 3 will pay a fee (see Fee Structure in section XVI page 11)

Tier 4 - Advanced/Elite

- Includes leagues, private groups and/or private coaching which offers 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, AAU/select/independent teams, for-profit organizations, camps, clinics, weekend tournaments, etc.
- Tier 4 will pay a fee (see Fee Structure in section XVI page 11)

III. Eligibility Requirements (Tiers 1 and 2 only)

League President or Area Chair, or other authorized agent, must complete and sign a Verification of Field Allocation Eligibility form (provided by the town) confirming that their sports league organization meets and complies with all of the applicable requirements 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 league 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 Town of Exeter and/or Exeter School District, organizes teams through 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, including yearly background checks for all volunteers
7. Organization verifies that a minimum of 95% of all registered players are SAU16 residents, should the minimum not be met, an additional \$1,500 fee will apply

Exeter Parks and Recreation reserves the right to audit all of the required information, and upon request all information must be provided to the Recreation Office at 32 Court Street, Exeter, NH 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 process of fields will follow the guidelines stated below:

1. All approved sports organizations for tiers 1 and 2 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 3 and provide required documentation.
2. The organization's 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). Organizations/groups may submit the following documents after these deadlines, but please note fields may be unavailable:
 - a. A Field Use Application (provided by the town)
 - b. A Verification of Field Allocation Eligibility Form (tiers 1 or 2 only) (provided by the town)
 - c. Proof of Liability insurance with required amounts: General Liability/Bodily Injury/Property Damage (combined) \$300,000/\$1,000,000 with additional personal injury of \$300,000 and the Town of Exeter listed as an additional insured.
3. Requests for additional field use not covered by the initial application must be submitted as a new application. Additional fees may apply.
4. Any organization that offers practices, games and/or tournaments for varying Tiers of Service must fill out separate applications for each Tier they offer.
5. **Tournaments require a separate Field Use Application. Tournaments are defined as any scheduled games which require an additional fee to enter competition. Tier 2 tournaments will be charged the Tier 2 hourly rental rate. Tiers 3 and 4 will be charged \$1,000 per day, which includes the entire facility. For example if reserving the Recreation Park renters will have all three softball fields and multipurpose fields. See section XV page 10 for details on How to Reserve a Field.**
6. Fields will be allocated in a fair and equitable manner, and in the best interest of the Town. However, the Town reserves the right to revise field allocations in accordance with section X. 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 II
 - b. Space/time will be allocated using the Sports Participation Guidelines outlined in section V.
 - c. Parks and Recreation administered programs and events have first priority of field use.
 - d. Traditional sports seasons have priority:
 - i. Spring (April 1 through June 30) - baseball, softball, lacrosse
 - ii. Summer (July 1 through August 25) - recreational baseball and softball

- iii. Fall (August 26 through November 15) - soccer, football
 - iv. 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. It may not be possible to grant all field allocation requests
 - f. No field use is assigned during the winter months
 - g. 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 and allocation
 - h. Parks and Recreation reserves the right to cancel a specific or entire allocation to accommodate the needs of any Town-sponsored event.
7. Once the allocation process is completed, field authorization documents will be distributed to each organization's Authorized Agent.
 8. Immediately following registration, any deviation to the projected teams/age groups (noted on the Field Use Application) will be shared and communicated by the organization to the Parks and Recreation Department.
 9. 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.
 10. 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, Exeter 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. Exeter Parks & Recreation recommends using the standards below 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
7-8 (Instructional)	1 hour	3	3
9-10 (Organizational)	1 hour	3	3
11 and up (Skill Enhancement)	1.5 hours	3	4.5

VI. Conditions of Field Use

Each sports organization will be held responsible for compliance with the following policies. Misuse of a town 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 Town fields is by Authorization only. Sports organizations without authorization, or that cannot produce their organization’s field authorization documents, will be required to vacate the premises.
2. The organization’s president, agent or designated liaison is responsible to ensure compliance of the rules and regulations regarding the conduct of teams while using authorized facilities.
3. The organization’s president, agent or designated liaison is responsible for ensuring that coaches receive their organization’s field authorization documents and understand the documents must be readily available on site during field use.
4. Only the requesting organization is authorized to use their assigned fields. Field renters may not allow another group to use their assigned field or use another field they were not approved to use.
5. Any use of fields without authorization or interfering with another authorized user may result in the revocation of all authorizations indefinitely.
6. 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
7. Teams must gather any trash after use and place it in trash receptacles. Tournaments are required to remove trash when receptacles are full and replace them with new bags.
8. Organizations are responsible for adhering to Field Maintenance Guidelines (Section VII)
9. No tarps, spikes or other material may be used on fields that could cause damage to the turf and/or irrigation systems.
10. Do not use fields during or after a heavy rain, when they’re too wet or muddy.
11. 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.

12. Multipurpose 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.
13. All vendor and food sales on Town 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 Town of Exeter Health Office (excluding prepackaged food).
14. Any equipment left on site must have prior authorization of Parks and Recreation and must be safely stored or secured. The Town of Exeter is not responsible for any equipment that may be damaged or cause personal or property damage/injury. Parks & Recreation requires access to any or all equipment/storage areas.
15. **Alcoholic beverages and glass bottles are prohibited** on the premises. This includes fields, parking lots, open spaces and roadways. Renters are expected to enforce this with all associated with the event.
16. **The use of tobacco products, e-cigarettes and smoking of any kind is not permitted** on athletic facility grounds.
17. If lightning/thunder is heard or seen, a mandatory delay of 30 minutes from the last sight or sound of lightning/thunder must be enforced and all players, coaches, officials and guests must leave the fields and seek shelter until 30 minutes has passed since the last sight or sound of thunder/lightning.
18. Parking is permitted only in designated areas. Private vehicles are not allowed in or near field areas. Illegally parked vehicles will be towed at the owner's expense.
19. No grills of any type are allowed, unless specific permission from the Director.
20. Dogs are prohibited from all town fields.
21. All signage content and placement wishing to be displayed must be approved by the Parks and Recreation Office. The Parks and Recreation office reserves the right to deny signage placement.
22. Any work being done to the fields must be approved by the Parks and Recreation Director prior to occurring.

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. Repairs should **NOT** be attempted by the user.
2. Fields should be groomed with appropriate methods of dragging only. **NO** vehicles of any type or small utility carts are allowed, except for authorized tractors.
3. Mowing of Town fields is not permitted.
4. All trash and debris must be disposed of into proper receptacles from the field, dugout, infield, outfield, and fence areas after all practices and games.

5. Damages discovered to Town 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 the Town of Exeter. If approved, any expenses for improvements incurred by the rental organization agrees that they will not be reimbursed for improvement expenses and that they are making a donation to the Town of Exeter. Furthermore, these improvements will not improve their standing regarding field allocation.
7. The Town reserves the right to cancel any field rentals due to inclement weather or unsafe playing conditions.
8. Pushing/spreading water is only allowed within the infields. **DO NOT PUSH water into the outfield.**
9. Renters are responsible for placement of appropriate bases. Please see Proper Field Maintenance video on Exeter Parks & Recreation website for more details.
10. Renters are responsible for applying and maintaining field lines for fouls/out of bounds.
11. Stockpiling material on site is prohibited unless pre-approved by Parks and Recreation.
12. NO chemical applications allowed. This includes all pesticides.
13. All goals must be secured to the ground or some type of pre-approved structure at all times to prevent tipping and must maintain safe playing conditions.
14. User groups are responsible for excessive use or damage to Town fields, equipment, and property as determined by the Town. 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. Inclement Weather Policy

The Town 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 canceled 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 Town owned fields to determine if use will occur. The Parks and Recreation Director or designated representative has the authority to close any/all fields. In addition, the Parks & Recreation Department has the authority to close town fields as determined by the Town. Groups witnessing misuse of fields by other scheduled or unscheduled users are requested to contact the Recreation Office at 603-773-6151.

IX. 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 Town. The Parks and Recreation Department will provide written notice of any violation and the action taken as a result of the violation.

X. Cancellation

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

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

The Town will make good faith efforts to provide advance notice to the field renter 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 Town is not obligated to provide alternate fields and will not issue a refund for cancellation

XI. Additional Supervision/Security

The Town has the right to require a field renter to provide additional volunteers, security, medical, or police protection when deemed necessary by the Town. Any resulting expenses/costs will be the responsibility of the field renter. Exeter Parks & Recreation will determine if additional supervision/security is needed and an agreement will be made in writing.

XII. Traffic and Parking

It is the organization's responsibility to alleviate parking and traffic issues. The assigned field renter may be required by the Town to provide volunteers to direct participants and spectators to designated parking areas. Parks & Recreation hosts a large summer camp (M-F) and the Daniel R. Healy Memorial Pool is open 7 days a week (Mid June-Mid August), renters may be required to find supplemental parking as to not put a burden on the parking at 4 Hampton Road. Please note that some neighborhood streets adjacent to the park are residential and may not have available parking.

XIII. Sponsorships

All sponsorship banners/physical displays must be approved by the Exeter Parks & Recreation Department.

XV. How to Reserve a Field

1. Fields are available for rent April 1st- mid-October (weather permitting). Please refer to our online calendar located at <https://exeter.recdesk.com/Community/Calendar> regarding availability. **The Recreation Office reserves the right to deny any rental request.**
2. All field rental requests must be submitted using the Field Use Application. The rental application is available by following this link: <https://www.exeternh.gov/recreation/parks-facilities> and also at the Recreation Office, located at 32 Court St. Exeter, NH 03833. The appropriate application must be filled out completely by the main contact and submitted to the Recreation Office. **All communication will be done with the main contact person listed on the rental application only.**
3. Requests will be accepted no more than 90 days out from the first use date, except for summer tournaments (tournament applications will be accepted no more than 9 months out from the first use date). All requests will be reviewed by the Recreation Director and an email response will be sent within ten (10) business days. If a conflicting request exists for the same day for the same field, the following criteria will be used to determine approval.
 - A. Town sponsored programs and prior contractual obligations.
 - B. Rental history and past compliance with Parks and Recreation Policies and Procedures with the requesting person/organization.
 - C. Current condition of fields and impact to them.
 - D. The Parks and Recreation Director or his/her designee shall have the discretion to resolve conflicts
4. When a field rental request is approved, the facility reservation agreement will be emailed to the main contact listed on the application.
5. The entire fee is due no later than 14 days after the receipt of the facility reservation agreement. If a request is made within 14 days of use, the total fee is due within 24 hours of approval notification.
6. New requests or changes for approved rentals will not be considered if submitted less than five (5) business days (Monday- Friday) of the use date. Submission of changes to the Recreation office does not guarantee approval, however, we will do our best to accommodate.
7. **No refunds will be given for unused rented fields or unused time during a rental timeframe. See our Refund Policy below for more details.**
8. A Certificate of Insurance is required at the time of booking for **ALL** rentals or field access will be denied. The renter shall provide the Town of Exeter with a comprehensive general liability insurance policy in which both the renter and the Town of Exeter are named as an additional insured, covering both bodily injury and property damage. The minimum policy limits are one million dollars

(\$1,000,000) combined single limit coverage. A copy of the certificate must be received by the Recreation office at the time of final payment.

9. **A rental is not final until payment and insurance is received.** Payment may be made by check, cash or credit card (MasterCard, VISA or Discover will have a 3% service fee) in person or by phone. Cash **will only be** accepted at the Recreation office. Please make checks payable to: EPRD

XVI. Fees and Services

Fields are available to rent in 1.5 hour blocks, except for tournaments which are available to rent by the day. Fields are available from 8:00 AM until dusk. Rates are subject to change.

Field	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4
*Rec Park Softball field 1	\$0/1.5 hour	\$25/1.5 hour	\$50/1.5 hour	\$100/1.5 hour
*Rec Park Softball field 2	\$0/1.5 hour	\$25/1.5 hour	\$50/1.5 hour	\$100/1.5 hour
*Rec Park Softball field 3	\$0/1.5 hour	\$25/1.5 hour	\$50/1.5 hour	\$100/1.5 hour
*Rec Park Soccer/Multipurpose field 1	\$0/1.5 hour	\$25/1.5 hour	\$50/1.5 hour	\$100/1.5 hour
*Rec Park Soccer/Multipurpose field 2	\$0/1.5 hour	\$25/1.5 hour	\$50/1.5 hour	\$100/1.5 hour
Gilman Park Baseball field	\$0/1.5 hour	\$10/1.5 hour	\$20/1.5 hour	\$25/1.5 hour
Park St. Common Baseball field	\$0/1.5 hour	\$10/1.5 hour	\$20/1.5 hour	\$25/1.5 hour
Brickyard Park Greenspace	\$0/1.5 hour	\$10/1.5 hour	\$20/1.5 hour	\$25/1.5 hour
Tournaments (see pg. 4 #5)	\$0/1.5 hour	Hourly Rate	\$1000/day	\$1000/day

*Availability is dependent on usage

XVII. Refund policy

No refunds will be processed unless written notification of cancellation is received by the Recreation office no later than 21 days prior to the use date. A \$25.00 cancellation fee per field per day will be deducted from your total refund. There are no refunds for field use canceled less than 21 days prior to the use date. No refunds will be given for unused fields that were rented or for unused time during a rental period. Any cancellation of fields at the request of the renter for reasons other than weather may result in the denial to rent these dates for the following year.

There will be no refunds issued due to cancellations issued by Exeter Parks & Recreation regarding: inclement weather, unsafe playing conditions, maintenance needs/issues, overuse of field, or violation of the policies and procedures set forth in the Field Allocation Policies and Procedures document.

XVIII. Available Rental Facilities

- Recreation Park (4 Hampton Rd. Exeter, NH) 3 softball/baseball fields, 2 multipurpose fields with space for soccer fields (depending on size)
- Park St. Common (Corner of Park St. and Epping Rd. Exeter, NH) 1 baseball field

- Gilman Park (Bell Ave. Exeter, NH) 1 Baseball field
- Brickyard Park (Kingston Rd. Exeter, NH) Multipurpose Fields

Questions

Any questions regarding these policies, please contact the Parks and Recreation office at 603-773-6151