

TOWN OF BETHLEHEM

Albany County - New York

PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

ELM AVENUE PARK

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Town of Bethlehem Athletic Field Use Policy

Introduction

The Bethlehem Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for allocating town owned field space to youth and adult sports programs. This includes town administered activities, programs run by other organizations, and facility space rentals. Town administered activities will take priority over all other uses.

I. Reservation Criteria

Fields will be allocated in a fair and equitable manner, in the best interest of the Town. Allocations will be conducted using a consistent set of criteria.

- a. Athletic fields are reserved in the following tiered priority order:

Group 1 - Youth Sports Organizations: "Priority" status

Requirements

- Serves only youth age 18 and under
- Serves a minimum 75% Town of Bethlehem and/or Bethlehem Central School District residents
 - Provides official league rosters for each team using Town fields. Must include player names and addresses
- Provides general liability insurance listing the Town of Bethlehem as additional insured, minimum \$1,000,000 coverage
- Includes a minimum of 3 youth teams in the organization
- Conducts background checks on all participating volunteer or paid coaches, at the organization's expense
- Recommends that all coaches attend at least 1 coaches training clinic, to be provided by the organization
- Submits a copy of organization's bylaws, a statement of organization philosophy, goals, residency requirement, proof of coaches background checks, proof of coaches training, age ranges of league participants and skill levels the organization is offering (recreation or travel or both). The above items are to be submitted once or as updated or requested
- Pays all fees and charges within due date specified or be subject to a late fee
- Demonstrates willingness to cooperate with Parks & Recreation staff with regards to scheduling, field maintenance and general use
- Fields may be allocated on a weekly or per game basis at the discretion of the department.

Group 2 - Youth Sports Groups/Team: Non-Priority status

Requirements

- Serves only youth age 18 and under

- Provides general liability insurance listing the Town of Bethlehem as additional insured, minimum \$1,000,000 coverage
- Serves at a minimum:
 - Town of Bethlehem and/or Bethlehem Central School District residents
 - 2A 75% or greater residency
 - 2B >50% residency
 - Provides official league rosters for each team using Town fields. Must include player names and addresses
- Fields will be allocated on a per game basis.

Group 3 - Adult Sports Groups/Team: Non-Priority Status

Requirements

- Serves adults (age 18+)
- Provides general liability insurance listing the Town of Bethlehem as additional insured, minimum \$1,000,000 coverage
- Serves at a minimum:
 - Town of Bethlehem and/or Bethlehem Central School District residents
 - 3A 75% or greater residency
 - 3B >50% residency
 - Provides official league rosters for each team using Town fields. Must include player names and addresses
- Fields will be allocated on a per game basis.

Group 4 –Other Sports Groups/Team: Non-Priority Status

Requirements

- Serves adults or youth
 - Provides general liability insurance listing the Town of Bethlehem as additional insured, minimum \$1,000,000 coverage
 - No residency requirement
 - Fields will be allocated on a per game basis.
- b. Fields are reserved for sport user groups at Elm Avenue Park, Henry Hudson Park, South Bethlehem Park, Bethlehem Firefighters Memorial Park, Town Hall, and Selkirk Park.
 - c. All fields must be used for the purpose for which they were intended, i.e. a softball team may not reserve or use a baseball diamond.
 - d. Additional criteria for field assignments include: use in previous years, date request was submitted (equal consideration will be given to all requests received by the submission deadline), number of fields requested, number of fields available, number of games to be played by organization or group, past history of problems with a particular team and/or league in regard to violating rules, regulations or payment.

II. Reservation Procedure

- a. Previous year's users will be emailed Field Permit Request forms and information with a deadline for submission.
- b. All other groups wishing to request a playing field must reserve the field through the Assistant Administrator of Parks and Recreation Department by completing a Field Permit Request form: <http://ny-bethlehem.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/View/2815>
- c. Camps sponsored by nonprofit organizations will be considered on a case by case basis.
- d. Each organization must apply for field use separately for each tournament.
- e. Each organization must apply for field use separately for each season.

- Spring - mid April to late June
 - Summer - July and August
 - Fall - Sept. 1 to mid November
- f. An approved field permit will be emailed to the organization representative designated on the Field Permit Request form when all forms and insurance requirements have been submitted.
 - g. The approved field permit must accompany a representative to the field each day.
 - h. The approved organization has exclusive use of that field during times and dates on permit only.
 - 1) If an organization is not occupying the field(s) during stated times on their permit, public use of fields will be allowed.
 - 2) However, fields may be closed to the public after grooming prior to games.
 - i. Fields are open to the public during all non-reserved times.

III. Insurance Requirements

- a. Each organization requesting Town fields must present a certificate of insurance prior to obtaining authorization to use Town fields. The minimum liability insurance coverage is one million dollars (\$1,000,000). The Town of Bethlehem must be named as the additional insured/certificate holder. The certificate of insurance should be sent to the Assistant Administrator, at the Elm Avenue Park Office.

IV. Decisions Regarding Field Conditions

- a. All daily decisions regarding the playability of a field are the responsibility of the group. A designated contact person should be named and provided to the Parks and Recreation Dept. Players, coaches, and parents must have a clear understanding of the group's cancellation notification policy. The Parks and Recreation Dept. also reserves the right to close fields if necessary.
- b. Once a game begins, the referee or umpire is responsible for the decision to suspend a game. His/Her decision is final. No other play should continue on the field once a game has been called.
- c. Safety of the players and potential damage to fields should be considered when making all decisions.
- d. Some of the reasons to cancel a game or practice include:
 - Standing water on the playing field
 - Soil is wet, spongy, or frozen
 - Steady rain is falling
 - A lightning/electrical storm is occurring
 - Play would result in damage to the field.
- e. The Parks and Recreation Dept. reserves the right to overrule any decision.
- f. The Parks and Recreation office should be notified when any game is rescheduled to ensure proper maintenance and grooming.

V. Maintenance

- a. The Parks and Recreation Dept. will prepare fields in accordance with the field schedule provided by the group. Every effort will be made to have them in playable condition. Weather conditions may be a factor in achieving this goal.
- b. The maintenance staff may request users to move at any time.
- c. All trash around field areas, pavilions, dugouts, etc. should be disposed of in containers provided at the end of each day/evening.
- d. All tarps (if applicable) must be removed and stored out of the field limits during play.
- e. All tarps (if applicable) must be replaced on the field when play is complete.
- f. Pesticide or any chemical application may only be done by park maintenance staff.
- g. Any field enhancement ideas must be submitted to the Assistant Administrator in writing using the Park Facility Enhancement Request Application:
<http://www.townofbethlehem.org/DocumentCenter/View/4290>

Services/Supplies Provided	Services/Supplies NOT Provided
Exclusive use during games/practice	Weekend maintenance
Mowing	Mound/homeplate rebuilding
Trimming	Extra Paint/chalk
Grooming	Infield material
Lining	Drying agent (except for tournaments)
Trash Removal	Tarps
Bases, some soccer nets	Major renovations
Water removal, game prep	
Mound/homeplate repairs	
Porta johns	<u>Services Available for Additional Fee</u>
Utility system repairs	Extra portajohn
Water	Extra picnic tables
Electric	Dumpster
Aeration	
Fertilizer	
Pest Control	
Minor field repairs/improvements	

VI. Injury/Damages

- a. All injuries must be reported to the Parks and Recreation Office within 24 hours if possible. Any written reports prepared should also be forwarded to the office.
- b. All damages and/or vandalism to the fields, buildings, portajohns, etc. must be reported to the Parks and Recreation Office within 24 hours if possible. Any written reports prepared should also be forwarded to the office.

VII. General Guidelines

- a. All billboard signs must be approved by the Administrator of the Parks and Recreation Dept. Billboards may be set up during the season but must be taken down at the end of the season.
- b. Smoking is prohibited on all playing fields.
- c. Alcoholic beverages are prohibited on all playing fields.
- d. ~~Dogs and other pets are not permitted on playing fields while in use.~~ Please refer to [Park Rules & Regulations](#) for updated information on dogs in parks.
- e. Organizations are responsible for the conduct of participants and spectators.
- f. Vehicles must park in designated parking areas only. Do not park on the grass. The Town of Bethlehem is not responsible for any damages.
- g. The Town of Bethlehem assumes no responsibility for personal property left or brought to a field area.
- h. All other cases involving use of Town of Bethlehem fields not stipulated in the aforementioned policy will be decided upon the discretion of the Administrator of Parks and Recreation and/or the Town Supervisor.