

# ARENA ALLOCATION POLICY

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| <b>Policy Number:</b>       | COMS – 005                                       |
| <b>Responsibility:</b>      | Manager, Recreation & Parkland Planning Services |
| <b>Approval:</b>            | General Manager, Community Services              |
| <b>Effective Date:</b>      | July 11, 2016                                    |
| <b>Date of Last Review:</b> | July 21, 2025                                    |

## 1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Clearly define and communicate how ice/floor time will be managed, allocated and distributed.
- Serve as a guide for the ice/floor allocation process.
- Promote and encourage participation in sports to the overall benefit of the community.
- Guide user groups through the process of booking ice/floor time.

The City of Sarnia Community Services Division wishes to promote, maximize, and optimize arena facility usage and to have age-appropriate times available to user groups. The City has an inventory of five arena pads: Pat Stapleton Arena (single pad), Clearwater Community Centre (twin pad), and the Progressive Auto Sales Arena (twin pad).

The City of Sarnia arena facilities are primarily for sports and recreation use in support of the community. The policies identified in this document establish and clarify the City's responsibility for ice/floor allocation, facility administration, and its commitment to the management of:

- Fair and equitable ice/floor allocation that maximizes use of the facility
- Fiscally responsible ice/floor facility operations
- Processing of tournament, special event and seasonal ice/floor rentals
- Special event management
- Annual affiliation process reporting
- General administration requirements
- Facilitate opportunities for active and healthy lifestyle
- Safe and accessible services for all people

## 2.0 SCOPE

In the City of Sarnia, the Community Services Division has the responsibility to manage the allocation and distribution of arena ice/floor time on an annual basis to reflect population, registration, utilization, and participation patterns. City staff are responsible for the implementation of the policy as outlined.

The City will responsibly manage its arena resources to ensure optimum usage and programming. The day-to-day operations of the City's recreation facilities containing the ice/floor pads will be the responsibility of arena staff in the Recreation and Parkland Planning Services Department.

This Policy will be reviewed annually by staff. Staff are authorized to make general housekeeping amendments to this Policy without the need for formal approval by Council. General housekeeping amendments are limited to non-substantive changes, which do not include how ice/floor time will be prioritized, allocated, and distributed. All housekeeping amendments will be logged and dated. The most current version of the Arena Allocation Policy will be published on the City's website. Substantive changes to the Policy shall be approved by Council.

City staff responsible for arena allocation and ice/floor facility operations will work in a cooperative manner in the implementation of this Policy.

## 3.0 DEFINITIONS

**"Adult"** means an individual and/or participant who is older than eighteen (18) years of age. May also refer to a group where the majority of participants are over eighteen (18) years of age.

**"Allocation"** means the action or process of scheduling or distributing designated time at City facilities.

**"Blackout Dates"** means the dates provided to user groups that are not available prior to the allocation of time, typically referring to Special Events and/or Tournaments.

**"Cancellation"** means the removal of an entire session or series from a rental contract, where the booking is not immediately rescheduled at the time of cancellation. For example, removing an entire Monday 5 p.m. – 8 p.m. session, or removing an entire recurring series of every Tuesday night would be considered cancellations.

**"City"** means The Corporation of the City of Sarnia.

**“City staff”** or **“staff”** means employees in the Recreation and Parkland Planning Services Department of the Community Services Division of The Corporation of the City of Sarnia.

**“Contract”** means the formal written rental or “permit” document issued by the City to the user outlining the temporary use of a facility.

**“Fees for Services”** means the Council-approved fees associated to services provided by the City. These fees are approved by Council annually and are subject to change.

**“Non-Prime Rate”** means the hours during which City arena facilities face the least amount of demand.

**“Prime Rate”** means the hours during which City arena facilities are in greatest demand.

**“Resident”** means individuals and/or participants living within the City, including Sarnia and Bright's Grove.

**“Standard of Play”** means a document that refers to user groups with governing bodies that includes their membership details and levels of play and is used to determine facility time allocation entitlements based on ice capacity calculations.

**“User”** means the group, organization, or individual utilizing the City facility.

**“Youth” or “Minor”** means an individual and/or participant who is younger than eighteen (18) years of age. May also refer to a group where the majority of participants are under eighteen (18) years of age.

## **4.0 POLICY**

### **4.1 Scheduling Process**

Arena ice/floor time will be allocated utilizing the following order of priority, with reasonable considerations:

1. City of Sarnia Programs and Services
2. Special Events and Tournaments
3. Junior Hockey (i.e. Sarnia Sting & Sarnia Legionnaires)
4. Resident Minor Sports Groups
5. Resident Adult Groups
6. Not for Profit Community Organizations
7. Private Commercial or For-Profit Organizations
8. Non-Resident Youth or Adult Groups

## 4.2 Definitions of Groups

### **CITY OF SARNIA PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**

The City provides access to recreational ice/floor opportunities through municipal skating programs.

Programs provide low-cost access to recreational skating and hockey opportunities organized through City staff.

Opportunities include, but are not limited to:

- Public skating
- Adult skating
- Shinny hockey
- Other ice/floor programming

Programs are provided in response to need and the provision of such programming is reviewed in conjunction with the review of this Policy.

### **SPECIAL EVENTS & TOURNAMENTS**

The City encourages an active role in facilitating, enhancing, and promoting festivals and special events in the City.

Special events would include, but are not limited to:

- Music concerts
- Shows
- Circuses
- Other entertainment related events

Generally, tournaments and special events are competitions hosted by recognized City minor sport groups. They may also include events of regional or provincial significance. Tournaments may also be hosted by seasonal organizations and other occasional users such as men's hockey leagues.

Tournaments and Special Event time is allocated above and beyond a group's regular season allocation. The City would continue to encourage existing tournaments and special events.

### **RESIDENT MINOR SPORT GROUPS**

1. A not-for-profit recreational group based in the City of Sarnia, dedicated to minor sports (18 and under) and with the majority of participants residing in the City.
2. An established provider of quality recreational programs, primarily for youth.
3. The main provider of its particular activity for youth in the City of Sarnia.

4. Organizations recognized as Minor Sports must also:
  - a. Have constitutions.
  - b. Be incorporated.
  - c. Have an auditable annual financial statement.
  - d. Be affiliated with a recognized regional, provincial or national organization. The choice of this affiliation is at the discretion of the minor sport group.

*(If the status of a minor sports group comes into question, the group may be required to reproduce documentation indicating the conditions under which it was granted partner status still apply.)*

### **RESIDENT ADULT GROUPS**

Groups in this category are defined as groups that use a facility on a weekly basis for an entire season. Examples include men's or ladies' hockey, pick-up hockey groups, etc. The City wishes to recognize long-term groups.

"Grandfathered" status will try to provide existing clients (prior to 2010/11 season) access to historical ice/floor (same or similar date or time) to all seasonal clients that have had the same hour(s) for two or more consecutive years prior to 2010/11.

The City reserves the right to change the ice/floor allocated to "grandfathered" clients when facility closures or restrictions must be applied, when ice/floor schedules negatively influence operational/program efficiencies and resident demands or to meet the core requirements of the City's minor sports groups.

In these circumstances, every attempt will be made to find an equitable ice/floor time replacement.

If a designated "grandfathered" group disbands or fails to apply for ice/floor time in consecutive ice seasons, they will lose their "grandfathered" status. If they reapply in a subsequent season, they will be treated as a new client. The "grandfathered" designation is not transferable.

### **NOT-FOR-PROFIT COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION**

A publicly funded school or a not-for-profit school recognized by the Province of Ontario as an education institution located in the City.

School bookings, including high school hockey and intramural teams, are administered on a first-come, first-serve basis through staff.

Duly recognized Service Clubs and Charitable Organizations are also part of this category.

## **PRIVATE COMMERCIAL OR FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS**

These groups are organizations or individuals that use ice/floor time with the intent of generating positive net income (profit).

### **4.3 Entitlement and Distribution**

#### **WEEKLY HOURS OF ENTITLEMENT AND DISTRIBUTION TO MINOR SPORTS GROUPS**

On an annual basis, the City's affiliated groups shall provide registration data for the previous year or for the upcoming year if this information is available. This information will be provided annually by the 31st of January.

The ideal ice/floor time allocation for various age and competition levels for hockey and skating shall be considered and is the ultimate goal in the allocation of ice/floor to the affiliated youth groups. The recommended standards will include, but may not be limited to, Alliance Hockey Association, Skate Canada, etc. This allocation will be the goal of this Policy. This information will establish the ideal ice/floor allocation to each group.

#### **TIME PERIOD ENTITLEMENTS AND RESTRICTIONS**

All affiliated youth groups will receive an equitable distribution of prime and non-prime hours in accordance with Section 4.3. Minor sport groups in the future may be required to have a minimum of 10% (minimum 1 hour) of ice time as non-prime ice.

All affiliated youth groups, regardless of gender, level of competition, and total hours of entitlement, shall not receive relatively more or less prime time access than a similar client.

Adult ice/floor time will not be allocated prior to 9 p.m., except where an earlier time may reflect a historical (aka "grandfathered") ice/floor time. The City retains the right to provide ice/floor time only at same or similar time. No ice/floor time slot is guaranteed. Exceptions may be granted where the requirements of youth and City recreational users are being met where ice/floor time is available and not required by youth.

Fall, Winter, Spring & Summer–Prime and Non-Prime

#### **Prime Time**

- **Monday to Friday:** 5:00 p.m. to 10 p.m.
- **Saturday and Sunday:** Open to 10 p.m.\*
- **Saturday and Sunday, April 1 to June 30:** Open to 10 p.m.

#### **Non-Prime Time**

- **Monday to Friday:** Open to 5:00 p.m.

- **Saturday and Sunday, July 1 to August 31:** Open to 10 p.m.

*\* Opening and closing hours may vary from arena to arena.*

### **DEADLINES FOR ICE/FLOOR TIME REQUESTS AND TIMING OF ALLOCATION**

When forwarding ice/floor time requests to City staff, the following time frames are essential. The date for final determination of ice/floor time is also indicated.

| <b>Season</b>                        | <b>Request Due</b> | <b>Allocation Date*</b> |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Fall/Winter</b> (Sept 1 – Mar 31) | April 1            | May 15                  |
| <b>Spring</b> (Apr 1 – June 30)      | December 1         | January 15              |
| <b>Summer</b> (July 1 – Aug 31)      | March 1            | April 1                 |

*\* Allocation timing is a goal and may be subject to change by the City.*

### **CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

Ice/floor time conflicts that arise will be highlighted by City staff. Staff will attempt to resolve the conflict in a manner consistent with the Policy.

Should a conflict remain, the groups will be asked to submit in writing the rationale for their requirement of the ice/floor time in conflict. The following factors will guide the final decision:

- Historical ice/floor allocation.
- The degree in which the user group ice/floor time requests have been met, apart from the ice/floor time request in conflict, and number of participants affected.
- The age of the user group as it relates to the ice/floor time in conflict.
- Residency of user group.

Should the conflict not be agreed upon following the above resolution process, final allocation decisions will be made by City staff.

## **4.4 Processing and Management of Tournaments and Special Events**

The City is committed to achieving a balance between recreational and tournaments/special event use during the regular fall/winter ice season. New tournaments will only be permitted where ice time permits, in accordance with the terms outlined in this policy. The goal of the City is to minimize the impact of tournaments on regular programs and league play.

## **4.5 Processing and Management Process**

Controls must be in place to minimize the negative impacts that unused, returned, amended, and cancelled ice/floor time have on the arena system

operation and its users. As such, City staff will apply all guidelines outlined in this Policy to reasonably and responsibly manage unused ice/floor or changing needs once permits have been issued.

### **COMPLETED CONTRACT**

City staff will provide to the user a rental contract listing all time allocated to the user for the season, based on timing in Section 4.3. The completed rental contract is due to be returned no longer than 10 days from receipt.

### **CHANGES TO CONTRACT**

City staff will make every effort to accommodate ice/floor allocation requests in accordance with this Policy.

Users with overdue accounts may, at the discretion of City staff, have their contract cancelled and/or lose their grandfathered status. Overdue accounts will be subject to an interest penalty as per standard City rate.

Once City staff have received the signed contract, the user agrees that all times listed in the contract will be paid on the first day of each month, from the beginning of the ice/floor season to the end of the ice/floor season, with no right of cancellation except for the following:

1. If the user refuses to use the facilities due to unsuitable surface conditions, provided the Manager or staff on duty is in agreement; or
2. If roads within the City are closed, or police are warning people to stay off roads within the City, as confirmed by staff; or
3. If the City cancels ice/floor time due to holidays, safety concerns, mechanical breakdowns, weather conditions, or emergency closures; or
4. If the City cancels due to a significant or high-profile event per Section 4.5.

### **TRANSFERRED ICE / ICE TRADES / SUB LEASED ICE (OR FLOOR)**

The City is the sole authority for all ice/floor times. The practice of transferring, trading, or sub-leasing ice/floor time between contract holders is NOT allowed.

It is recognized that last-minute changes to the intended use of the ice/floor may occur under infrequent and unforeseen circumstances. The City must be aware of, and be able to control, the intended use of all ice/floor permitted within its facilities at all times.

City staff must be notified by the contract holder, even after the occurrence, of any ice/floor time that was not used or was used by someone other than the contract holder. In this event, staff will make every effort to reallocate the cancelled ice/floor time based on the priority outlined in this Policy. If this

available ice/floor time is not booked to another user, the original contract holder will be responsible for payment of that ice time.

**Failure to notify the Parks and Recreation Department may result in termination of the permit and cancellation of future bookings.**

**CONTRACT CANCELLATION**

Once an ice/floor rental contract has been finalized, the following cancellation policies are in effect.

If a user is unable to fulfill their seasonal commitment and regularly cancels ice/floor time requested, the City reserves the right to make a permanent adjustment to the user's next year allocation.

| Client                         | Cancellation Period  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Affiliated Youth Club/Leagues  | Prior to the seasonal commitment, <u>30 days' written notice</u> to City staff is required to receive full contract refund.  |
| Affiliated Adult Clubs/Leagues | Once the season has started, <u>14 days' written notice</u> to City staff is required to receive full contract refund. Minor Sports groups may not cancel non-prime ice/floor time unless a minimum of 10% is maintained.  |
| Youth Club Leagues             |  |
| Adult Club Leagues             | Where a user regularly cancels an ice/floor time using the 30-day cancellation policy, the City reserves the right to adjust the contract and cancel this time for the remainder of the season.<br><br>In either case, if City staff receives less notice than is required, but is able to book the ice/floor time, a full refund will still be provided.  |
| Tournaments and Special Events | 60 days' written notice to City staff in order for full refund. A partial refund of 25% shall be given with 30 days' written notice to City staff. In this event, City staff will make every effort to reallocate the cancelled ice/floor time based on the priority outlined in this Policy.<br><br>In either case, if City staff are able to book the ice/floor time, a refund will be provided.<br><br><u>Skate Sarnia</u><br>For competitions/test days sanctioned by Skate Canada, Skate Sarnia may cancel up to 30% of the booked ice no later than 14 days prior to the test day. |

| Client            | Cancellation Period   |
|-------------------|---|
|                   | <u>Sarnia Hockey Association, Sarnia Girl's Hockey, Lambton Jr. Sting AAA &amp; Others</u><br>To promote tournaments, users may cancel up to 30% of the ice time booked no later than 14 days before the first day of the tournament. |
| Commercial Groups | 30 days' written notice to City staff in order for full refund. Where less than 30 days' written notice is provided, a refund will only be given if City staff are able to rebook the ice/floor time.                                 |

### **CITY OF SARNIA PROGRAM CANCELLATIONS**

In order to minimize user frustration, dissatisfaction, and other negative impacts, the City will not cancel City programs and leisure skate times, with the exception of the following:

1. Significant and high-profile events or as directed by Council.
2. Low registration in programs.
3. Emergency shut down situations or ice/floor maintenance.
4. City run or sponsored programs on special days (i.e. Family Day).

Where such cancellations are necessary, City staff will make reasonable efforts to notify users of such programs.

### **CONTRACT CANCELLATIONS BY THE CITY OF SARNIA**

The City reserves the right to reasonably postpone, reschedule, or cancel any contract due to various circumstances. The City reserves the right to cancel a contract or portion of a contract without notice or refund should there be a breach of conditions or regulations, or should the City be of the opinion that the facilities are not being used for the purpose contained in the application, or for a significant or high-profile event as approved by Council.

## **4.6 General Ice Management**

### **ICE FLOOD SCHEDULES AND DRESSING ROOMS**

Rental of ice time is based on a "50-minute hour". The time that the user may actually use the ice would be 10 minutes after the hour or half-hour that is listed as the start time on the rental contract.

A minimum of one-hour bookings is required, with increments of 30 minutes thereafter.

The City requires that all groups supply weekly ice use schedules and flood requirements to the Arena Operations Supervisor or designate on a weekly basis during the season.

The City reserves the right to accept or modify ice flood requests to ensure operational efficiencies.

The City reserves the right to allocate dressing rooms based on the number of participants and/or teams using the ice and other uses occurring in the facility. User groups shall receive a dressing room 30 minutes prior to their rental and are entitled to that room for a maximum of 30 minutes after rental.

The City will not be responsible for any lost, damaged, or stolen goods or money, whether from a dressing room or elsewhere. Further, the consumption of alcohol or drugs on the arena premises is strictly prohibited, and, as per the *Smoke Free Ontario Act*, the smoking of tobacco in public places, including any portion of the arena, is prohibited.

### **CURFEW**

The City reserves the right to curfew any games, including tournament games, to maintain the schedule submitted and will consider cancellation of any or all contracts if the user does not cooperate with implementation of this Arena Allocation Policy.

Users are responsible to advise City staff of any special requirements regarding curfews at the time the schedules are submitted.

### **NEW ORGANIZATION OR EMERGING SPORT**

When reasonable, the City will recognize a new organization or emerging ice/floor sport and will make reasonable effort to allocate ice/floor time to enable it to establish its programs and services in the City. Recognition and ice/floor allocation will occur once the conditions and criteria outlined in this Policy are met and if existing users will not be adversely impacted.

New organizations/programs will be accommodated only to provide for unmet community needs.

Where possible, the development of new programs or the expansion of groups should be encouraged to be extensions of organizations already established (i.e., creating umbrella organizations).

### **HOLIDAYS/OPENING ARENA OUTSIDE OF STANDARD HOURS OF OPERATION**

As outlined on the City of Sarnia website.

## **4.7 General Administration**

### **ICE/FLOOR REQUEST APPLICATION PROCESS**

All applicants and users must submit all requests for contract applications (ice/floor time), amendments, and cancellations as per City-issued application processes.

### **ICE/FLOOR REQUEST APPLICATION REJECTION PROCESS**

The City reserves the right to reject applications and requests from users who submit forms which are not complete or contain incorrect information.

### **ARENA ALLOCATION POLICY REVIEW**

The Arena Allocation Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, initiated by City staff.

### **INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL FACILITY USERS**

All users of City facilities are required to obtain and hold general liability insurance, through a Certificate of Insurance (COI) or through insurance partnerships with the City. Details and requirements are outlined on the City's website.

Exceptions may apply, per applicable City of Sarnia policies. Requirements for general liability insurance are outlined in the rental contract.

A COI or proof of insurance is due to be submitted to the City no later than the deadlines listed below, applicable to whichever comes first:

- Prior to the first date booked; and/or
- Two (2) weeks following the receipt of a tentative or firmed rental contract; and/or
- Two (2) days prior to the first rental start date.

Failure to submit an appropriate COI or proof of insurance may result in the cancellation of rentals and/or termination of a contract.

Upon expiry, documents showing renewed coverage are again to be provided, and the organization will make policies available to the City for review from time to time and in the event of a claim.

### **ANNUAL AFFILIATION USER GROUP UPDATES**

Each season, before a user group can submit their ice/floor time requests to City staff, an update of their affiliation process must have taken place. See form titled *City of Sarnia Sport League Affiliation Application*.

## **PAYMENT AND FEES**

As per the [Payments and Cancellations of Program Registrations and Facility Rentals Policy](#).

Additional fees will be charged for ice/floor rentals that exceed their allocated time as outlined in the rental contract, based on the currently hour rate. This fee will be automatically added to the contract.

## **5.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **User Groups and/or General Public**

- Liaise with appropriate City staff on the submission of any application forms, requests, or other documents, as required.
- Comply with the procedures as outlined in this Policy.

### **Community Services Administration**

- Act as a liaison with users, ensuring compliance with this Policy.
- Support users and/or staff, as needed.
- Uphold the procedures as outlined in this Policy, where applicable.
- Partake in the review of this Policy to ensure accuracy and compliance.

### **Recreation Coordinator**

- Act as a liaison with users, ensuring compliance with this Policy.
- Liaise with departments and/or individuals/organizations, as required.
- Uphold the procedures as outlined in this Policy, where applicable.
- Coordinate the review of this Policy to ensure accuracy and compliance.

### **Operations Staff**

- Liaise with departments and/or individuals/organizations, as required.
- Uphold the procedures as outlined in this Policy, where applicable.
- Partake in the review of this Policy to ensure accuracy and compliance.
- Communicate and coordinate any maintenance requirements regarding allocation, where applicable.

### **Managers**

- Liaise with departments and/or individuals/organizations, as required.
- Uphold the procedures as outlined in this Policy, where applicable.
- Partake in the review of this Policy to ensure accuracy and compliance.

## **6.0 RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

COMS-001

*R-Zone Policy*

COMS-002

*Festival and Event Policy*

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| COMS-004 | <i>Municipal Alcohol Policy</i>   |
| COMS-010 | <i>Sports Field Allocation Policy</i>   |
| COMS-016 | <i>Payments and Cancellations of Program Registrations and Facility Rentals</i> |

## 7.0 GOVERNING LEGISLATION

N/A

## DOCUMENT HISTORY

| Revision   | Date          |
|--|---------------|
| Policy created   | July 11, 2016 |
| Revised policy name, removal of operational and holiday hours, updated insurance and payment process, and updated to new template. | July 21, 2025 |