



Anderson Park District 2023 Field Use Policies

Approved 10/11/2022

The Board of Park Commissioners has directed the Anderson Park District (APD) staff to manage APD facilities as follows: for the primary benefit of Anderson Township residents and business owners; for maximum feasible use within each park's carrying capacity; for fair and equitable distribution; for the provision of maintenance within the approved budget.

These Field Use Policies were created considering the majority of the groups who obtain "exclusive use" permits for APD facilities. Modifications and exceptions will be considered on an individual basis. All requests for consideration of an exception to a specific policy to meet your organization's needs should be made in writing to the APD Executive Director.

Failure to comply with any local, state, or federal laws, or with APD standards, policies, and/or rules and regulations may cause user(s) to be determined to be ineligible to participate in APD programs, events, and/or leagues, and/or to use APD parks and/or facilities.

The APD staff strives to fairly and consistently administer the field use policies as outlined below. League representatives/liaisons are responsible for providing copies of the APD Field Use Policies to all coaches, referees, participants, and the parents of participants under the age of 18.

I General Policies

1. APD parks are open to the general public from dawn to dusk. Non-organized walk-on use is permitted on most APD fields. All organized field use requires a written permit. If a permit holder arrives with a written permit, the field must be vacated. The APD reserves the right to limit or prohibit an organized group from using a field without a permit. Clear Creek Park athletic fields and Riverside Park ball diamonds are available for use by permit only. Some fields may be designated for rest or will be closed to allow for maintenance, or as conditions dictate. A permit issued by the APD supersedes any other organization's permit.
2. During certain periods, facilities may be reserved for general public use, rather than league play.
3. "Hourly-use" reservations will be booked on available fields for an hourly fee consistent with the APD policy of charging a fee for "exclusive use". Residents of Anderson Township are charged a discounted hourly rate.
4. Where ball diamonds and soccer fields overlap, softball/baseball use will have priority over other spring sports.
5. Starting times for reserved, "exclusive use" of APD facilities are: 9:00 a.m. Monday through Saturday; 12:00 p.m. (noon) on Sunday, except at Kellogg, Riverside, and Clear Creek Parks, which can be reserved everyday beginning at 8:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. on Sundays at Beech Acres Park. The Board of Park Commissioners has authorized the Executive Director or their designee to grant exceptions to this policy on an individual basis.

6. Air horns and other loud, noise-making devices are not permitted on APD fields within the proximity of residential neighborhoods. Exclusions to this policy are Clear Creek, Riverside, and Kellogg Parks.
7. Field schedulers must stagger starting times wherever possible and as dictated by APD staff for specific facilities to ease parking and traffic concerns.
8. Due to heavy use on APD facilities, the turf-growing season for athletic fields is extremely limited. Therefore, use before April is strongly discouraged and is kept to a minimum. If practice before April is absolutely necessary, it should take place in areas that will not negatively impact the field areas for the upcoming season.
9. Fields are to be left in a litter free condition. Organizations will be fined for fields that are left in a littered condition. The current fine is \$145, (this amount will be revised to thus reflect the fine amount for littering, as set by the Hamilton County Courts), plus \$40 per hour (one hour minimum) for the time required to pick up the litter. The last team scheduled on that field will inherit the responsibility for litter removal; therefore, if you take a field that contains litter, your options are to require the team who is leaving the field to pick up after themselves, or your team must pick up the litter to avoid being assessed the fine. The APD will notify the organizational liaison within three (3) days of the violation.

If a Hamilton County Sheriff or any other law enforcement officer witnesses a litter violation, the individual may also be cited.

10. No person or organization shall sell or offer for sale any article, item, privilege or service within the park without a permit from the Executive Director or their designee (i.e. team pictures, merchandise and/or concessions).
11. APD may photograph and/or video participants on park property, and may publish such image(s) in an outlet to promote and/or publicize the APD.
12. Goals owned by an organization must be removed within two (2) weeks of the conclusion of their field rental period. Goals are pinned and staked for the safety of all patrons. It is unlawful to remove the pins and/or stakes, or to move goals without written permission from APD management.
13. Organizations found using a field without a permit issued by APD will be subject to a fine of \$150, a one-year suspension of field use plus any applicable rental fees.
14. The discharge of fireworks is prohibited in the Anderson Parks without specific written permission from the Board of Park Commissioners.

II Ohio's Return to Play Law and Ohio's Lindsay's Law

Youth sports organizations, coaches, referees, officials, and instructors are required to follow the guidelines for concussion training, safety, and awareness requirements as presented in Ohio's Return to Play Law, and the APD's Concussion Policy. Youth sports organizations,

coaches, parents, and players are required to follow the guidelines for sudden cardiac arrest education and training as presented by the Ohio Department of Health in accordance with Ohio's Lindsay's Law.

III Field Assignment and Permit Process

For All Weather Fields, see the All Weather Fields Rental Agreement and Policies

1. **Prioritization of Field Assignments**

Field use assignments are determined by the number of teams, participants, and the percentage of residents participating in the league, based on the prior year's survey or new data provided by the organization. Anderson Township residents are given priority for field use.

2. **Field Requests**

- a. The APD will distribute Field Request Forms to each organization to submit by a deadline. Organizations which have used APD fields in the past, but with significantly different participation numbers, must report the estimated growth/decline in participation and follow up with the submission of rosters when they are available.
- b. Organizations that have never used APD fields must submit their estimated number of participants on the Field Request Form and submit team rosters.
- c. Based on the information provided on the completed Field Request Form, the APD will notify organizations of their temporary allocations to allow the organization to schedule their season. APD staff will work with league schedulers to advise them of the parameters for the allowable scheduled use for each field. Schedules cannot be finalized until the APD has had an opportunity to review and approve the schedules.
- d. Schedules must be received and approved by APD before any publication of schedules. Final permits are based on actual approved league practice and game schedules.
- e. All schedules must be submitted in an Excel format, including the following column headers: Field Name, Reservation Date, Beginning Time, Ending Time, Teams Playing.
- f. It must be understood that organizations are not entitled to 100% use of the fields during their season unless they have paid for all of the available time. The APD will fill other requests according to the available open time. The APD reserves the right to modify schedules.

3. **Rosters and Permit Information**

- a. All organizations must submit their "League Rosters", to the APD office, with the most up-to-date information, as soon as it is available, but no later than the last week of the organization's regular season play. Discounts will be applied to organizations according to the percent of residency on their rosters. If rosters are not submitted, the invoice will reflect the 100% non-resident rate. Failure to submit league rosters before the end of regular season play will result in a \$250 non-refundable penalty that will be added to your

invoice. Additionally, fields may not be allotted in the following season or year if rosters are not submitted from the previous season/year. Field fee payments must be paid before the season if rosters were not submitted the previous season.

- b. The APD is aware it is nearly impossible to be 100% accurate throughout the season, due to roster changes; the information provided must be accurate as of the date on which the information is submitted. Invoices will be emailed or mailed to the league representative.

Please keep in mind that residents of Clermont County, Newtown, and Mt. Washington are not residents of Anderson Township and do not pay taxes to the Anderson Park District.

4. **Waivers**

Each organization is required to carry sufficient liability insurance and name the Anderson Park District as an additional insured. Each organization must require participants to sign waivers indemnifying and releasing all field providers (Anderson Park District, Anderson Township Government, and Beech Acres Parenting Center; their respective Boards, staff, and assigns) of all liability and responsibility in the event of accident or injury. The organization or league must maintain the waivers for two (2) years after the conclusion of the season. The Anderson Park District will request a copy of an individual's waiver only if needed.

5. **Late Requests**

Generally, requests received after the fields are assigned will be considered based on available remaining time. Schedules may be modified or altered to accommodate reasonable late requests.

6. **Schedule Changes**

The APD reserves the right to alter schedules as needs arise; the APD will notify the league representatives in all cases. In addition, the APD will: manage athletic fields according to conditions; limit the number of games and practices on any given field; and determine the amount of time required between games at its sole discretion. Fields may be closed as conditions dictate. Refunds and/or credits will be issued under such circumstances if alternative field arrangements cannot be made.

In order to qualify for an adjustment to your organization's account, all schedule changes/reschedules must be received in writing by the Thursday before the upcoming weekend for a weekend change; and at least two days prior to the scheduled date change for a weekday change/reschedule. If the organization initiates a schedule change/reschedule, it is not approved until a written permit is generated by the APD.

IV Fees and Charges for Exclusive Use of Fields

Please refer to the current year, Anderson Park District Fees and Charges schedule.

V Field Fees and Payment

The taxpayers of Anderson Township subsidize the cost of field operations and maintenance; fees offset a portion of these expenses. Field fees will be charged according to the scheduled, permitted use assigned to each organization. All field fees are charged by the hour, including,

but not limited to hours used for practices, games, tryouts, camps, pre-season, and post-season tournaments. No more than two (2) teams may practice on a field at any time except at Clear Creek Park, where no more than one team may practice on any field. Invoices for league play will be issued at the conclusion of the playing season unless other arrangements have been requested and granted. Payment is due two (2) weeks after receipt of the invoice. If payment is not received by the due date, a 10% charge will be added each month to any unpaid balance.

1. To cancel a game/practice, you must notify the APD at least one (1) week in advance in order to receive a credit. You may e-mail, APDFields@AndersonParks.com; fax, 513-388-2494; or mail, Anderson Park District, Reschedule, 8249 Clough Pike, Cincinnati, OH 45244.
2. Tryouts and practices scheduled by individuals will be invoiced and must be paid prior to usage.
3. Tournaments and events will be invoiced separately and may be required to pay a percentage of the requested fields and services prior to usage.
4. To obtain a credit or to reschedule a game(s) or practice(s) **cancelled because of inclement weather or cancelled by APD (i.e. fields are closed for play)**, a representative of the organization must do one of the following within two (2) weeks of the original date: e-mail, APDFields@AndersonParks.com; fax, 513-388-2494; or mail, Anderson Park District, Reschedule, 8249 Clough Pike, Cincinnati, OH 45244.

Please provide the following information within two (2) weeks of the original date:

- a) Name of Organization
- b) Representative's name and phone number
- c) Date, time, and facility that could not be used
- d) Date, time, and facility requested for reschedule

A cancelled game (**for reasons other than inclement weather**) must be reported at least one (1) week prior to the original date to receive credit.

VI Field Closing and Damage

1. Rainout Line is the new weather status hotline for Anderson Park District for fields, allowing field status notifications instantly on a variety of platforms and options. Field status updates can be found on our website, www.AndersonParks.com (under the Weather Status tab at the top of the home page), on the Rainout Line website, www.RainoutLine.com (search Anderson Park District), or download the Rainout Line App for free on smart devices. Rainout Line offers subscribers instant field status and the ability to sign up for text or email alerts. A traditional call-in hotline, 513-443-3003, is also available with separate field extensions.
2. When the APD Weather Status indicates a field is closed, fields are not to be played on under any circumstance. Anyone who plays or practices on a closed field will be subject to a \$150 fine per field plus damages and may be subject to a one-year suspension of eligibility for use

of any APD field, even if coaches and/or officials are not present. The loss of rental revenue may also be assessed and included on the invoice if the field is rendered unplayable due to the actions of the offender.

3. The Operations Manager or their designee will check the fields and will make the determination to close fields as conditions dictate.
4. When damage to a field is observed or discovered, litter is left on a field, or a team is found playing on a closed field, the incident is reported to the Business Specialist and the Executive Director. The Business Specialist will collect the pertinent information and will invoice the permit holder.

All questions or concerns pertaining to the invoice are to be directed to the Business Specialist (513-388-4512), who will investigate the concern, gather the necessary information, and report back to the permit holder. If the APD is in error, the necessary correction or action will be taken. Otherwise, the Business Specialist will respond that the invoice must be paid and will make the permit holder aware of the appeal process (see Section IX).

All fines and charges for damages must be paid before field privileges will be reinstated. If the permit holder wishes to appeal, they may secure the fine and charges with cash, certified check, or accepted credit card, which will be held by the APD until the appeal is heard and a decision is rendered.

4. Criteria for Closing Fields

The Anderson Park District, and their respective Boards and staff, assume no liability in the event of an accident or injury and make no warranty as to the playing conditions that may exist on any of the facilities they provide. **If coaches, league representatives, or referees deem conditions (including weather and/or other factors) to render a field unsafe, they must stop play immediately. All fields should be vacated if lightning, thunder, or any other element is present which threatens the safety of the participants and/or spectators.**

Criteria for Closing Soccer and Lacrosse Fields

The following conditions will determine if soccer or lacrosse fields are to be closed:

- a) Standing water or muddy conditions in the high traffic areas of the field (i.e. goal areas and the center of the field).
- b) Wetness to turf that will cause soil structure damage, thinning of turf, and/or further damage to already worn areas.
- c) Slippery surfaces which could:
 - 1) Effect player safety
 - 2) Cause divots, which may dry to a rough surface
- d) The presence of frosted or frozen turf conditions.
- e) Some fields may be closed at Clear Creek Park regardless of field conditions when grass parking areas cannot support parking for the number of scheduled fields due to wetness or other conditions affecting the availability of grass parking.
- f) Less stringent standards may apply when making decisions for a special event or tournament.

5. Ball Diamond Closing

The condition of each ball diamond will be posted on the Weather Status page and Rainout Line; however, generally the closing of ball diamonds will be the responsibility of the coach, umpire, or league supervisor as decided by the individual leagues. The guideline to follow is that a field is too wet to play on when the in-field material clings to the soles of shoes. If turf conditions are deemed to be too wet by the APD, an update will be made on the Weather Status page and Rainout Line, and teams should stay off the turf.

When fields are overly saturated, APD may close fields for a set period of time, prohibiting any repairs/field maintenance from being conducted by certified field repairers. This may be necessary to allow a field time to recover enough to safely perform maintenance without causing damage to the field. Any field closure will be communicated on the Weather Status. In summary; it is important to check weather status prior to use.

Representatives of teams may work on baseball fields ONLY after completing the APD Field Maintenance Workshop. However, water and dirt may never be swept or raked into the turf areas, as this activity is harmful to the future playability of the field. Organizations and/or individuals who damage a field through improper maintenance and/or repairs will be charged a fine of \$150, per field, in addition to the expense to repair the field, and may be subject to a one-year suspension of eligibility for use of any APD field regardless if coaches and/or officials are present. The loss of rental revenue may also be assessed and included in the invoice if the field is rendered unplayable due to the actions of the offender. The Business Specialist will issue any fines, following an investigation and once information is gathered from the Operations Manager and any others involved.

6. All ball fields must be raked after every practice and game. Home team or team practicing must rake dirt back into the batters boxes, catcher and umpire areas, pitching mound areas, and sliding areas at the bases. This will help to prevent field damage and reduce rain outs. Rakes are located in equipment boxes at each field or field area. Failure to rake after practices or games may result in permits being revoked for the remainder of the season.

VII Hotline

Field status updates will be based on scheduled use at the following times:

Monday - Friday

12:00 p.m. (early report) Monday-Friday

4:00 p.m. (final/update report) Monday-Friday

Saturday - Sunday

7:30 a.m. (early report) Saturday and Sunday

10:00 a.m. (final/update report as needed) Saturday and Sunday

Updates may be made after the early and final reports as conditions change. It is the responsibility of each team representative to check the Weather Status before playing on a field, particularly if inclement weather has developed or continues throughout the day.

If coaches, league representatives, or referees deem conditions (including weather and/or other factors) to render a field unsafe, they must stop play immediately. All fields should be vacated if lightning, thunder, or any other element is present which threatens the safety of the participants and/or spectators.

Special arrangements can be made in advance for earlier updates to be posted on the APD Weather Status for special events and/or specific league cancellations.

VIII Tournaments, Camps, and Special Events

All requests for tournaments, camps, and special events must be submitted separately on the Special Event Request Form. If the event is feasible, the event coordinator must arrange the required pre-event meeting with the Business Specialist (513-388-4512) or designee. Fees for such activities are assessed outside of regular season use. The APD reserves the right to require a deposit and surety bond for special events. A deposit may be required for securing time for tournaments and/or special events. Forms and information are available on the APD website www.AndersonParks.com (Athletic Fields – Field User Forms). APD staff is eager to assist your organization to create a successful event at APD facilities.

IX Appeal Process for Fines and Assessments

1. All appeals must be issued in writing, postmarked or delivered to staff at the Anderson Park District, 6915 Beechmont Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45230 within two (2) weeks of the date of the invoice. The appeal letter should clearly state the specifics of the incident and the reason(s) for the appeal.
2. A \$50.00 filing fee (cash, accepted credit card, or certified check) must accompany the appeal. This filing fee will be returned if the permit holder is found not responsible for the imposed fine. Should the Appeals Board find the permit holder liable, this fee will be retained. It will not be applied to the fine.
3. The Appeals Board shall be comprised of: the Executive Director or designee; a representative of an organization not involved in the appeal (to be designated by the Executive Director); and a member of the Board of Park Commissioners.
4. The appeal will be scheduled for a mutually agreeable date and time.
5. All parties will be given a reasonable period of time to ask questions and present information.
6. After all information has been disclosed, the Appeals Board decision will be rendered by a majority vote. The Appeals Board will render a written decision to the permit holder within 7 to 10 business days.

Decisions rendered by the Appeals Board are final.

X The Anderson Park District reserves the right to modify the Field Policies at any time, as needs arise.