

# RIVER FOREST PARK DISTRICT ATHLETIC FIELD USE POLICY

## I. Introduction

The River Forest Park District (RFPD) places a premium on, and is committed to maintaining, the very high quality of its parks and athletic fields. Use of the RFPD athletic fields is in high demand and field availability is often limited. The RFPD must allocate sufficient time for field maintenance, rest and repair, and as such, the Board of Commissioners of the RFPD has directed RFPD Staff to administer the RFPD fields in such a way as to manage use in a fair and equitable manner, yet without jeopardizing field quality, conditioning and care. This RFPD Field Use Policy discusses the regulations and procedures governing the use of the Park District's fields.<sup>i</sup>

Use of RFPD athletic fields for non-scheduled use such as pick-up games or non-athletic activities such as picnics and field days is permitted under this policy without fee or restriction with the following exceptions. Scheduled use takes priority over non-scheduled use and athletic field use is not allowed when the field has been closed by the RFPD.

## II. Prioritization of Field Use

Given the limited field availability and necessity of proper field maintenance and care, the RFPD has established a tiered priority schedule for Organization<sup>ii</sup> field use.

### Tier 1 Priority Use

- RFPD-sponsored programs and activities.

### Tier 2 Priority Use (Must have more than 95% River Forest Residents)

- RFPD-Affiliated Groups.<sup>iii</sup> Affiliated Groups with 95% or greater River Forest Residents (i.e. River Forest Youth Baseball Softball, River Forest Youth Soccer).
- River Forest Public Schools – District 90

### Tier 3 Priority Use (Must have more than 70% River Forest Residents)

- RFPD-Affiliated Groups.<sup>iii</sup> Affiliated Groups with 70% or greater River Forest Residents.
- River Forest Schools. Schools located within the Village of River Forest which make their facilities available for use by the RFPD.
- Independent Team. A team with 70% or greater River Forest Residents which is not part of a larger organization and has a River Forest Resident as head coach or assistant coach.
- Oak Park River Forest High School. The 70% residency requirement shall be waived whenever OPRFHS facilities are available for use by the RFPD.
- Resident Team. A team which has more than 70% River Forest Residents and has a River Forest Resident as head coach or assistant coach, but is part of a Non-Resident Organization.

### Tier 4 Priority Use (Must have more than 50% River Forest Residents)

- River Forest Resident Organizations. Organizations with more than 50% River Forest Residents.
- Resident Team. A team which has more than 50% River Forest Residents and has a River Forest Resident as head coach or assistant coach, but is part of a Non-Resident Organization.

### Tier 5 Priority Use

- Non-Resident Organizations. Organizations which do not meet the requirement to be considered River Forest Resident Organizations.

All RFPD-Affiliated Groups, Schools, and Organizations wishing to use RFPD athletic fields must apply for a field use permit, as explained below. Permit fees for Non-Resident Organizations are generally higher and Applications will be considered only after the Application deadline for higher-priority organizations has passed.

The RFPD Staff has the full and exclusive discretion to determine field availability for organizations wishing to use the RFPD fields. Nothing in this Policy shall be interpreted to mean that a field is available for permitting just because it is not being used or appears to be unused. Rather, it may be scheduled for field maintenance and repair (pre-planned and as needed), or have been renovated with controls that are not readily visible, or may have been deemed by the RFPD staff to be at its maximum use level in light of its condition and future scheduled use. Appropriate “non-use” periods must be allotted so that the RFPD fields remain in the best possible condition. The RFPD will make a concerted effort to schedule field renovations and turf maintenance after the athletic season is over.

### III. Field Requests, Rosters and Permits

Each organization seeking a RFPD field use permit must submit a completed *Application for Field Utilization* form by the designated deadline, along with a complete roster. Completed rosters are necessary to determine whether the organization qualifies as a River Forest Resident Organization. Therefore, until the organization submits (and the RFPD reviews) a complete and accurate roster, no permit will issue. To facilitate the completion and accuracy of the roster, the RFPD suggests that organizations include a question in their registration package that asks the participant for his or her address and whether he or she is a River Forest resident.

Upon receipt of the Application and roster, RFPD Staff will review the information provided and notify each organization as to whether field availability exists. If fields are available for use by the organization, the RFPD staff will work with the organization’s leaders to advise them of scheduling parameters and to develop a schedule. It is not until the RFPD Staff reviews and approves the schedule that a permit will issue, and under no circumstances may the organization use RFPD fields prior to the issuance of a written permit.

In the event an organization’s roster changes during the duration of the permit period, the organization must notify the RFPD Staff within five (5) business days of such event being known. Failure to do so may result in the immediate revocation of the field use permit and denial of field use privileges for up to one year from the date of revocation. The RFPD reserves the right to audit rosters. By completing the *Application for Field Utilization*, the applying organization acknowledges its responsibility to pay the remainder of the applicable Non-Resident Organization fee if a change in the roster would change the organization’s classification from a Resident Organization to a Non-Resident Organization.

The RFPD is aware that certain contingencies do not allow an organization to commit to a roster prior to the time fields are needed, i.e. if the organization requests field use to conduct a try-out before the final roster is known. In such cases, the organization’s leaders should contact Park District Staff to discuss the situation and submit a *Single Use Field Request Form*.<sup>iv</sup>

### IV. Fees

Fees for athletic field lighting are not included in the following Field use fees.

#### Tier 1 Priority Use

- No Field use fee

#### Tier 2 Priority Use

- Affiliated Groups - No Field use fee
- River Forest Public Schools – District 90 - No Field use fee
- Unaffiliated Hourly Use - \$5

Tier 3 Priority Use

- Affiliated Groups - Field use fee of \$5 per player per season
- Unaffiliated Hourly Use - \$10 per hour
- Hourly or per player fees waived if facilities are made available for use by RFPD.

Tier 4 Priority Use

- Hourly Use - \$15 per hour

Tier 5 Priority Use

- Hourly Use - \$20 per hour

All fees must be paid prior to the use of the fields and are based upon the schedule of field use time as approved by the RFPD Staff. The RFPD also requires a security deposit from any organization using its fields, in the amount of 50% of total usage fee or \$500 (whichever is more), to cover any damages caused or other funds owed by the organization. Following the term of use, the RFPD will return the security deposit if it is not necessary to retain the same.

V. Insurance and Waiver

Before a field use permit is valid, each organization must also provide evidence of liability insurance that includes a provision naming the River Forest Park District, its elected and appointed officials, its employees and its agents as additional insured's. The liability insurance must have a minimum Bodily Injury and Property Damage coverage of one million dollars (\$1,000,000) per occurrence, plus \$2,000,000 aggregate. Excess liability insurance of \$500,000 per occurrence and \$500,000 aggregate is also required. The organization must maintain, fund and keep in force said insurance coverage during the entire period of field use. Such insurance shall also provide that no change of, modification in or cancellation of any insurance shall become effective until the expiration of 30 days after written notice thereof is given to the RFPD by the insurance company. Additional coverage may also be required under special circumstances.

Additionally, before a field use permit is issued, each organization must require all participants (or parent/guardian, if minor) to sign waivers indemnifying and releasing the River Forest Park District, its elected and appointed officials, its employees, its agents and its assigns from liability and responsibility in the event of an accident, loss or injury. Each organization must provide the RFPD with a copy of a waiver signed by each member (or parent/guardian), and the organization must maintain the waivers for two years after the conclusion of the permit period.

VI. Schedule Changes

The RFPD reserves the right to make schedule and/or field changes upon request or upon its own initiative. If alternative field arrangements cannot be made following a schedule change initiated by the RFPD, a pro rata refund or credit will be issued for field time lost.

VII. Miscellaneous Terms and Conditions of Field Use

The following additional terms and conditions apply to all organizations wishing to use the RFPD fields:

- Use of Athletic Fields for non-organized non-supervised play (i.e. pick-up games) is permitted under this policy without fee or restriction except that scheduled use takes priority over unorganized play. Non-organized play is not permitted when the field has been closed by the RFPD.
- Any field use permit may be revoked for misrepresentation in the application, by violation of terms and conditions of the permit or application, by violation of any rules, policies, ordinances or regulations of the RFPD, including all provisions contained in this

Field Use Policy, or by violation of any laws of the Village of River Forest, the State of Illinois or the United States of America.

- All Organizations must adhere to Thor Guard lightning detection system warnings. Failure to obey a warning signal to clear the fields of participants is strictly forbidden and may result in suspension of the Organization's field use permit. After a warning signal has been given, play may not resume until the all clear signal is given.
- The turf grass is the safety surface for athletic fields. If any of the following conditions occur, scheduled games and practices may be canceled or postponed by the RFPD.
  - Standing water on the field of play
  - Soil Saturation
    - Walking on turf causes water to surface
    - Walking on turf on with heels of athletic or gym shoes causes indentations
    - One inch or more of rain 48 hours prior to scheduled game or practice accompanied by steady rain on game or practice day.
    - Steady downpour of rain on game or practice day which could cause damage to turf or injury to participants.
    - Audible thunder, visible lightning, or visibility (darkness)
- The Organization and all of its members must abide by pronouncements and instructions announced in the RFPD Rain Hotline: (708) 802-1314. Should rain begin to fall after the latest RFPD Rain Hotline update and prior to the start time for field use, the Organization must obtain RFPD permission prior to using the field.
- The organization and all of its members agree to release the RFPD, its elected and appointed officers, its employees, its agents and its assigns from liability for injury caused through the use of the RFPD fields.
- The RFPD will not assume responsibility for lost, stolen or damaged property.
- All of the following activities are prohibited at all times: All fires of any kind; Use of any grill or other cooking devices; Trapping, catching, wounding, or killing any animal or robbing any nest; All uses of motor driven vehicles; Soliciting, peddling, hawking, selling and taking up collections; Advertising of any type (including sports leagues) except when specifically authorized by permit; Golf and any form of it; Dumping of anything other than waste generated from permitted activity.
- The member of the organization seeking a field use permit must be at least 21 years of age, and adequate adult (21 years of age or older) supervision must be provided at all times the organization uses RFPD fields. The organization is solely responsible for all necessary supervision.
- Once the RFPD issues a field use permit to an organization, a representative of the organization must carry the permit at all times while the organization is using the RFPD fields.
- The organization and all of its members must follow all regulations and policies set forth in the Field Use Permit. They must also abide by federal, state and local law, and by all River Forest Park District rules, policies, ordinances and regulations
- The use of sound amplification systems, electrical equipment and any other equipment not essential to the nature of the field use is prohibited, except when specifically authorized on the field use permit.
- Possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages is strictly prohibited on RFPD property.
- Organizations using the RFPD athletic fields and other park facilities are responsible for any set up, clean up and maintenance required to leave the site in an orderly condition upon departure. Each organization is responsible for all damages to RFPD property in excess of normal wear and tear and normal clean up, and will be assessed appropriate penalties therefore.
- Dogs and cats must be on a leash at all times, and any solid waste must be picked up.
- Organizations using the RFPD athletic fields must immediately report any perceived hazard or danger on RFPD property to the appropriate authorities.

- Any group of five (5) or more persons (other than RFPD-sponsored programs and activities and RFPD-Affiliated Groups) wishing to use RFPD fields for group play or use is considered an Organization under the terms of the RFPD Field Use Policy, and therefore must obtain a permit prior to using RFPD fields.
- School captain's practices are considered organized play and require a permit.
- Any violations of this Policy may result in the revocation of the organization's Field Use Permit for up to one year, or other penalty or fine as provided for by RFPD ordinances and regulations.
- This list of Miscellaneous Terms and Conditions is not meant to be all inclusive. For a complete list of Park Regulations, call (708) 366-6660.

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<sup>i</sup> As used throughout this Policy and accompanying Application for Field Utilization, "field" and "athletic field" includes all RFPD playing surfaces and shall be broadly construed.

<sup>ii</sup> As used throughout this Policy and accompanying Application for Field Utilization, "Organization" means any group of five (5) or more persons belonging to a team, club or league (other than RFPD-sponsored programs and activities) wishing to use RFPD fields for organized group play or use.

<sup>iii</sup> As used throughout this Policy, an "Affiliated Group" is one which has executed an Affiliation Agreement with the RFPD. Affiliation status may be requested by any group whose membership consists of 70% or greater River Forest Residents, and whose board of directors consists of 80% or greater River Forest Residents, and whose headquarters is domiciled in River Forest.