

City of Columbus Recreation Department Recreation Program Fee Policy

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a consistent and equitable framework for setting, administering, and collecting fees for recreation programs offered by the City of Columbus Recreation Department. Program fees help offset operating costs while ensuring recreational opportunities remain accessible to residents of all ages and income levels.

II. Policy

It is the policy of the City of Columbus to open participation in Parks and Recreation Department programs to anyone and charge fees to participants of those programs to meet cost recovery guidelines outlined in this policy. The fees charged to participants of recreation programs shall be established by the Recreation Department to meet the guidelines provided in this policy.

III. Definitions

1. *Youth* – age 17 and under
2. *Adult* – age 18-54
3. *Older Adults* – age 55 and older
4. *Special needs* – individuals of all ages who require special accommodations due to physical and/or mental disabilities.
5. *Sports Team* – Compilation of individuals who participate as a group in a designated sport, i.e., basketball, soccer, baseball, flag football, etc.
6. *Administrative costs* – General cost of administering programs such as clerical staff, legal counsel, administrative overhead, payroll and finance functions, capital improvements, etc.
7. *Operating costs* – Costs directly related to the operation of a program. These costs include direct program staff, supplies and services.
8. *Resident* - Any person who lives within the limits of the City of Columbus
9. *Non-resident* - Any person who lives outside of the limits of the City of Columbus

IV. Cost Recovery

1. Youth instructional and sports programs, as a whole, shall recover at least 110% of the operating costs of those programs.
Exception: Any new or pilot program shall be required to recover 75% of the operating costs during the first two years of the program.
2. Adult instructional and sports programs, as a whole, will recover 110% of the operating costs of those programs.
3. Older Adult programs, as a whole, shall recover 110% of the operating costs of those programs.

4. Drop-In and Special Event programs, as a whole, shall recover 0-50% of the operating costs of those programs thru fees or sponsorships/donations.
5. Contractual program fees will be set-up to recover the administrative costs of the City and adequately reimburse the contractual provider.
6. Programs operated jointly with another municipal department will not charge a non-resident fee to participants from that community.

V. Fees

1. User fees will be charged through team entry fees, individual fees, and/or user fees.
2. All youth and adult program participants requesting to register after the deadline will be accepted if available spots remain in the program and a late processing fee of \$10.00 is paid.
3. All program fees will be established based on the cost recovery guidelines and will be reported out to the Parks and Recreation Board on a quarterly basis.
4. Participants having financial difficulties may apply for fee assistance as outlined in the Recreation Financial Assistance Program.
5. All non-residents as defined in Article III will be charged an additional 25% fee on top of the resident rate of participating in a program.

VI. Falsification of Information

The registrant will be removed from all registered programs and all fees will be forfeited if the registrant falsified information on a registration form.

VII. Refunds

1. A full refund will be credited/issued to the participant for any program cancelled by the Recreation Department.
2. A full refund will be credited/issued to the participant if a program time, date, or location is changed by the Recreation Department and the participant is unable to attend because of the change.
3. A team fee will be refunded until the deadline for the team registration. After the deadline, the team fee will be refunded only if there is another team willing to fill that spot in the league. Refunds will not be granted for any reason after the playing schedules are created by the Recreation Department.
4. All refund requests not identified in Items 1-3, must be approved by the Recreation Committee through a written request. The Committee will review the request at its next scheduled meeting after the department receives the refund request.
5. All refund requests, if applicable, will be credited to the family account in the registration software program. Requests for a refund via check will be subject to a \$10.00 processing fee for each participant and program.
6. Late fees paid by either teams or individuals will not be refunded.
7. Refunds of \$5.00 or less will not be processed, but will be credited to the family account.

VIII. Review of Policy

1. This policy will be reviewed annually by the Recreation Committee and any changes or revisions will be forwarded to the City Council for final review.