

Parks, Recreation and Culture

Affiliated Community Group Policy

Document #:

Branch: Parks, Recreation and Culture

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Approved By:

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Prepared By: Recreation Services

1.0 Policy Statement

The Town of East Gwillimbury (the “Town”) is a community where diversity is celebrated, and inclusivity is embraced. The Town also encourages its residents to reach their full potential and make choices to live healthy, active lives. To encourage these choices, the Town seeks to address financial barriers to better enable community organizations or groups to access use of Town-owned community centres, arenas, sports fields, picnic areas, and public gathering places, known as community recreation facilities, for both organized and informal use.

2.0 Purpose

The Affiliated Community Group Policy aims to create a standardized and transparent framework managed by East Gwillimbury’s Parks, Recreation, and Culture (PRC) department. This policy is designed to support both emerging and established groups by ensuring the fair and equitable allocation of facility space to those who meet the criteria for designation as an affiliated community group

3.0 Scope

The Affiliated Community Group Policy applies to volunteer groups, not-for-profit groups and organizations that are interested in providing a range of recreational, social, cultural, and/or sports programs or events to the residents of East Gwillimbury.

4.0 Definitions

Term	Definition
<i>Allocation</i>	PRC's right to issue facility permits for the use of community recreation facilities as per the Facility Allocation Policy.
<i>Board of Directors</i>	A volunteer group of individuals elected through a democratic process to provide leadership and to implement programs and services for the community group.
<i>Affiliated Community Groups</i>	A community organization or group governed whose primary purpose is to provide recreation, social, cultural and/or sports programs to residents of the Town of East Gwillimbury through the involvement of community volunteers. Non-profits and charities must be governed by a volunteer board of directors to be eligible. Community groups that are neither non-profits nor charities are not required to have a board of directors to be eligible. The group has been approved as outlined in the Affiliated Community Group Policy.
<i>East Gwillimbury Resident</i>	An East Gwillimbury Resident who resides permanently in East Gwillimbury
<i>Facility Permit</i>	The document contains terms and conditions for exclusive use of public recreational spaces. Such terms and conditions include duration, equipment requirements and costs.
<i>Financial Records</i>	A statement showing the community affiliated groups' ability to meet its financial obligations.
<i>Membership List</i>	A detailed list of all members of the community affiliated group that includes name, full address including postal code and phone numbers.
<i>Membership/Registration Fees</i>	Detailed list of varying fees charged to the members of the community affiliated group.
<i>Social Services Organization</i>	A local, regional, provincial, or national agency that exists to deliver a service for the welfare of the East Gwillimbury community, including registered charities.

5.0 Responsibilities

5.1 Affiliated Community Groups will:

- Strictly adhere to the guidelines outlined in the Affiliated Community Group Policy.

- Ensures all members/participants adhere to the Town's policies and procedures outlined in the facility permit Terms & Conditions.
- Maintain up-to-date membership lists.
- Provide the Town with an updated insurance certificate on the Town's insurance form prior to the insurance policy expiry date, where applicable.
- Respect the intent of the Town of East Gwillimbury Facility Permitting Policy, and facility conditions of use and comply with the booking and cancellation requirements of facility booking policies.

5.2 Town Responsibilities

- Once a group becomes an Affiliate Community Group, the Town will support the community group by providing those services outlined in the Policy.
- The Town of East Gwillimbury reserves the right to request additional information at any time, act as a liaison for the group, be present at annual general meetings and allocate facilities according to the Facility Allocation Policy.
- The Town is not responsible for the decisions and/or actions of any Affiliated Community Group or its members.
- Applications submitted by community groups seeking affiliation status are assessed in accordance with the criteria established by this Policy.
- Notification of eligibility or ineligibility will be sent in writing.
- The Town will review application and respond to the applicant group within 15 business days of receiving the complete application.

6.0 Community Group Affiliates Policy

The Affiliated Community Group Policy is designed to provide support to new and established eligible Affiliated Community Groups in the delivery of their programs and services. The following is a list of supports available to Affiliated Community Groups and is dependent on facility space, staff, and department resources.

- Facility allocation priority according to the category of user as defined in the Facility Allocation Policy.
- Use of community centre lobbies for registration, at applicable community group rates.

- Subsidized rates for facility rentals as approved by Council.
- Provision of one free meeting room once per year to accommodate an Annual General Meeting.

7.0 Eligibility Criteria for the Designation of Affiliated Community Groups

To be designated as an Affiliated Community Group, the group must meet the following criteria:

- Have a primary mandate to provide recreational, art, cultural, social and/or sport programs and services that meet community needs not being met or fully met by an existing Affiliated Community Group with membership/participation that is open to all East Gwillimbury residents.
- Have a documented mission and/or mandate statement.
- If deemed appropriate have articles of incorporation confirming the Affiliated Community Group status as not-for profit or confirmation of registration verifying charitable status or confirmation of being a member of a provincial/national/international not-for-profit organization.
- Not-for-profits and charities must have a governance structure of a volunteer Board of Directors. However, community groups who are neither not-for-profits nor charities are not required to have a Board of Directors.
- Financial records are maintained in accordance with Canadian accepted accounting principles and where practical, annual financial statements audited by a professional accountant. A group must show that it can carry out its objectives and meeting its financial obligations
- Have a written constitution and by-laws and/or operating procedures establishing the framework within which the group will operate. A group must operate in an open and democratic manner through the holding of “annual general meetings” and the election of an executive from the general membership.
- The group, at its sole cost and expense, shall insure its activities in connection with this policy and obtain, keep in force, and maintain insurance.
- Groups must adhere to all applicable Municipal, Provincial and Federal Policies and Bylaws.

8.0 East Gwillimbury Residency Requirements

- The community group, volunteer Board of Directors and/or Executive committee must be made up of 75% East Gwillimbury residents.

- A minimum 75% of the community group's membership must be East Gwillimbury residents.
- Social service organizations memberships/registrations must have a minimum of 51% of East Gwillimbury residents.

9.0 Application for Affiliated Community Group Designation

An application for designation as an Affiliated Community Group must contain the following:

- Mission statement and/or mandate of the group.
- For organizations that are not-for-profits or charities, Confirmation of Articles of Incorporation (Not-for-Profit) or Registration letter verifying charitable status or charter membership of a provincial/national/international not-for-profit organization, if deemed appropriate.
- A list of Board of Directors and/or Executive Committee including names, addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses (only required for not-for-profits and charities).
- A contact telephone number/website for public inquiries.
- Verification of participant numbers for residency validation.
- Certificate of insurance on the Town's Certificate of Insurance Form (where required).
- A schedule of programs, services, and/or events that the Affiliated Community Group currently provides or is planning.
- Letter(s) of Agreement(s) documents(s) confirming the right to operate the program from a provincial or national governing body (or where required.)
- A complete financial statement of the previous operating year's expenditures and revenues, and a budget for the next operating year, signed by two authorized officers if applicable.
- Other information as required by the Parks, Recreation and Culture Department.

10.0 Approval of Affiliated Status

Applications for affiliated status will be approved by the Manager of Recreation, Community Engagement and Events, or their designate. This requires each group to adhere to the requirements and stipulations outlined in the Affiliated Community Group Policy and any changes deemed necessary. Approvals for affiliation status are granted for a maximum of two years from the date of approval. Affiliated Community Groups must reapply to renew their status – approval is not guaranteed in subsequent years. As a condition of approval, all outstanding debts to the Town must be paid in full.

11.0 Termination of Affiliated Status

Affiliated status may be rescinded by the Manager of Recreation, Community Engagement and Events, or designate, and future requests for assistance may be denied if the Affiliated Community Group:

- Fails to operate in a financially responsible manner.
- Revokes its constitution, by-laws, or operating guidelines.
- Acts in contravention of the constitution, by-laws, or operating guidelines.
- Acts in contravention of this policy.
- Abuses the services and privileges provided.
- Violates any provincial or federal legislation or municipal by-law with respect to the activities of the group.
- Fails to abide by a ruling from the Ontario Human Rights Commission regarding the Affiliated Community Group's actions.

The Town reserves the right to request and review audited statements, accounting records and other documentation at any time.

Documents can include participant/membership lists, meeting minutes, promotional material, policies, and procedures at any time. Failure to provide requested documentation may result in the Affiliated Community Group status being revoked. Groups are to comply within five business days to maintain Affiliated Community Group status.

Affiliated Community Groups may terminate affiliation status at any time. Requests to terminate affiliation must be made in writing and must be signed by the Affiliated Community Group's executive members.

Related Documents

Facility Permitting Policy