

Sportsgrounds and Facilities Allocation Policy

Policy Reference Number –

File Number –

Adopted by Council –

Date for Review – 30th April 2027

Responsible Officer – Manager Recreation and Leisure Services

Branch – Recreation and Leisure Services

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 Yarra City Council (Yarra) will allocate the use of its sportsgrounds and facilities to Hirers that align with Yarra values and that are actively contributing to health, wellbeing and inclusion for the whole community.
- 1.2 The Sportsgrounds and Facilities Allocation Policy outlines the eligibility criteria and selection process for how these assets are allocated.
- 1.3 The policy replaces the allocation criteria aligned with the Yarra City Council Sports Strategy 2008-12 and has been expanded to apply to all allocation types.

2. Yarra Values

- 2.1 We aim to achieve the greatest outcomes for the community through delivering our Council Plan and working with, and for, all in Yarra.
- 2.2 Our values guide our conduct and working relationships with colleagues and the community.
 - 2.2.1 Accountability: We own what we do and expect others to as well.
 - 2.2.2 Respect: We include all. Diversity is our strength.
 - 2.2.3 Courage: We are intentional in our actions. We seek the brave path.

3. Purpose

- 3.1 To ensure a responsible, consistent, transparent and equitable approach to the allocation of Yarra's sportsgrounds and facilities.
- 3.2 To outline the expectations on Hirers and their role in making a positive contribution to health, wellbeing and inclusion for the Yarra community.
- 3.3 To provide agreed principles to prioritise use and management of sportsgrounds and facilities.

4. Scope

- 4.1 This policy applies to the allocation of sportsgrounds and facilities managed by Yarra City Council.
- 4.2 This policy is relevant to sports clubs, associations, community groups, schools, and private and commercial organisations wishing to apply for an allocation.
- 4.3 Tenants who occupy Yarra facilities under a lease or licence agreement will be measured against the criteria from this policy upon re-negotiation of their agreement.

5. Objective

- 5.1 To ensure a diverse range of participants and activities across Yarra's sports facilities.
- 5.2 To provide an inclusive approach to sport, active recreation and physical activity opportunities.
- 5.3 To improve the physical, mental and social health and wellbeing outcomes for the Yarra community by ensuring facilities users are aligning their behaviours and culture with the values of Yarra.
- 5.4 To ensure Council owned sportsgrounds and facilities are occupied by Hirers who provide safe, welcoming, well governed and sustainable programs.

- 5.5 To drive and encourage usage of Yarra's sports facilities by underrepresented groups within the community.

6. Guidelines /Procedures for Hirers

- 6.1 All Hirers must:
- 6.1.1 Provide current public liability insurance (insurance coverage must meet Council requirements);
 - 6.1.2 Not have any outstanding debts to Yarra City Council;
 - 6.1.3 Accept the terms and conditions of facility hire.
- 6.2 Other requirements may be communicated to Hirers depending on the nature of the activity taking place.
- 6.3 Council recognises the impact of bookings on turf sportsgrounds and the need to maintain playing surfaces. As such, capacity on each sportsground will not exceed 30 hours of allocated use per week.
- 6.4 Hirers based in Yarra will have priority over Hirers based outside the municipality.
- 6.5 Seasonal Hirers can refer to section 6, 7 and 8 of this policy for more information on the allocation process.
- 6.6 Access to sportsgrounds and facilities will be prioritised based on the type of user group, detailed below.

- 1) Seasonal Hirers
- 2) Not-for-profit community groups
- 3) Government schools
- 4) Private / commercial hirers and private schools

7. Allocation of Sportsgrounds and Facilities for Seasonal Hirers

- 7.1 Seasonal sportsground and facility hire are allocated for the purpose of providing sport and/or recreation programs where there is a benefit to the Yarra community.
- 7.2 Seasonal Hirers account for the majority of sportsground and facility allocations in Yarra. In order to achieve an ongoing allocation the Hirer must first meet essential criteria.

Essential Criteria
Registered as a legal entity (such as an Incorporated Association)
Affiliated with a State Sporting Association (SSA)
No financial debts owing to Yarra City Council
Provide current public liability insurance (insurance coverage must meet Council requirements)
Provide details of active participant numbers and demographics
Provide a detailed schedule of use for the requested facility
Acknowledge and sign the Child Safe Clause
Acknowledge and sign the Victorian Fair Play Code
Deliver ongoing programs or initiatives that cater for underrepresented groups
Accept the terms and conditions of seasonal facility hire

- 7.3 Allocation periods are typically based on traditional summer and winter sports seasons. However, it is acknowledged that new and emerging sports may have alternate season dates which will be accommodated where possible.
- 7.4 Seasonal Hirers will be required to submit an application prior to each allocation period, specifying their allocation preferences.
- 7.5 Winter and summer season allocations will take priority over off-season allocations.
- 7.6 Indicative season dates fall into four allocation periods, which are subject to change from season to season to align with scheduled competition dates.
- 7.6.1 Winter season allocation
- 1 April – 30 September
- 7.6.2 Summer season allocation
- 1 October – 30 March
- 7.6.3 Winter off-season allocation
- 15 January – 30 March
 - Up to 4 weeks between 1 November – 20 December*
- 7.6.4 Summer off-season allocation
- 1 August – 30 September

*Ground availability may vary each season, subject to ground conditions and maintenance programs

8. Allocation Framework

- 8.1 The extent of allocations a Seasonal Hirer will be considered for is dependent upon the number of participants and programs they cater for.
- 8.2 All eligible Seasonal Hirers will be allocated a primary facility (i.e. a home ground) as a priority before Hirers are allocated a secondary facility.
- 8.3 Where multiple applicants request the same facility, applications are subjected to Yarra's allocation framework and scored according to the weightings for each item. Hirers will be scored based on how well the allocation framework is met.

Item	Allocation Framework Criteria	Weighting
Community First		30
1	Documented evidence of a partnership / network with not-for-profit organisation/s within City of Yarra	5
2	Evidence of Child Safe Policy, including training, incident reporting process and record of Working with Children Checks	5
3	Evidence of partnerships and/or reciprocal arrangements with City of Yarra clubs and businesses	5
4	Evidence of how sustainability and waste management practices are implemented and communicated with members	5
5	Active participants comprise 50-75% Yarra residents	5
6	Active participants comprise 75-100% Yarra residents	5
Inclusion and Diversity		30
7	Planned initiatives and activations that target one or more underrepresented groups	5
8	History of delivering initiatives and activations that target underrepresented groups in previous seasons	5
9	Evidence of a safe, inclusive environment including welcoming off-field social activities	5
10	Provision of a documented inclusion and participation policy/plan, including equitable programming schedule	5
11	The Hirer can demonstrate diversity within the decision making positions of the organisation (e.g. committee, coaching)	5
12	The Hirer can demonstrate that it actively engages with its stakeholders to embed inclusion and diversity values and behaviours	5
Financial Management		20
13	Provision of a financial plan including annual budget	5
14	Provision of a financial statement and annual financial report	5
15	The Hirer can account for outstanding liabilities to creditors	5
16	The Hirer can demonstrate equitable fees and charges to its members	5
Governance		20
17	Previous history of good tenancy at Yarra facilities	5
18	The Hirer can provide a detailed risk management plan and policies that demonstrates both physical risk and dispute resolution	5
19	The Hirer can provide a strategic plan that links to a detailed operating budget	5
20	Registered with an organisation that supports strong club governance (e.g. Good Sports, Sports Community, Vic Sport etc.)	5

9. Allocation Framework – Scoring Scale

- 9.1 Applications for sportsground and facility hire are scored against the allocation framework utilising a scoring scale from 0 to 5. Council Officers will determine scores based on season applications and the quality of evidence provided by Seasonal Hirers.

Scoring Scale	Criteria
5	Meets criteria to the full extent
4	Meets criteria to a high level
3	Meets criteria to a medium level
2	Meets criteria to a low level
1	Barely meets criteria
0	Does not meet criteria

10. Glossary

Sportsgrounds	Natural turf ovals and pitches designated for the purpose of sport and recreation
Facilities	Incorporates all hireable sporting facilities managed by the Recreation Services unit. This includes all pavilions, halls, tennis/netball courts and cricket nets
Seasonal Hirer	Any organisation seeking ongoing access to a Yarra sportsground or facility (typically sports clubs)
Based in Yarra	Refers to Hirers based in a physical location within City of Yarra, and/or the service they provide directly benefits the Yarra community
Not-for-profit groups	Organisations who are registered with Consumer Affairs Victoria as not-for-profit and do not earn a profit for owners or members
Underrepresented groups	Populations identified as less likely to have opportunities to be physically active, based on demographics such as cultural background, gender, sexuality, age, religion, socio-economic status. The Recreation Services Unit can provide more information on specific priority groups which may evolve over time
Allocation period	Term in which grounds and facilities are assigned to a Seasonal Hirer or Hirers
Active participants	People currently involved in playing, coaching and facilitating sport within the organisation i.e. does not include past players/members