



## **GASTON COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITY USE GUIDELINES**

The purpose of these guidelines is to:

- Outline allocation procedures for the permitted use of athletic fields in Gaston County.
- Maximize the use of County owned fields in a manner that is fair, equitable, and consistent with the mission of Gaston County Parks and Recreation while balancing facility use to foster ideal field conditions.
- Ensure that fields are used for recreational functions that meet the needs of the community.
- To set clear policies, rules, and regulations for field use.

**NO FACILITY WILL BE RESERVED FOR ANY PERSON, ORGANIZATION, OR TEAM WHO HAS NOT PAID FOR PREVIOUS USE.**

### **A. Procedures for Booking**

Fields will be allocated in a fair and equitable manner, and in the best interest of Gaston County. Allocations will be conducted using a consistent set of criteria based on the priorities in these guidelines:

- A facility usage request form must be completed and submitted to the Athletic Facility Coordinator before a rental can be considered. The request form is available on our website at [www.gastongov.com/parks-rec](http://www.gastongov.com/parks-rec).
- Please allow a minimum of two (2) business days for review and consideration of all field requests.
- **YOUTH TEAMS/LEAGUES:** If you are requesting practice times for youth leagues, you must submit a proposed schedule giving the number of teams and how much time is being proposed for each team's practice. This is so all teams can be allocated an equal amount of time on the fields. Spring usage requests will be due the first Friday in February for baseball and softball. Spring usage request for soccer will be due the first Friday in January. The spring usage request will run to the end of July. Fall usage requests for all sports will be due the third Friday in July. Fall request dates are from August 1<sup>st</sup> and run through the end of December. **Anyone requesting fields after due dates will be subject to field availability.**
- School events have first priority on all school fields.
- No school field will be scheduled before 3:00pm (Monday through Friday) while school is in session.
- It may not be possible to grant all field requests. Parks and Recreation reserves the right to make adjustments to the field allocation process as needed to address recognized needs or resolve conflicts.
- No field use is assigned during designated maintenance or field recovery periods.

- Past history, previous use of fields, timely payments, prompt return of request for information, and compliance with established conditions of use and park rules will be considered when allocating fields.
- Parks and Recreation must be notified immediately if an allocated field is no longer needed or if there is a change in organizations schedule.
- If an allocated field(s) is not used as scheduled by the designated organization, Parks and Recreation reserves the right to reassign and adjust field allocations accordingly. Organizations will be notified prior to reassignment.

#### **B. Athletic Field Priority Ranking**

The following list shows the order in which priority is given for athletic field use.

- Gaston County Park and Recreation in-house, sponsored, or co-sponsored events
- Local youth organizations
- Multi-day tournaments
- World, National, or State Tournaments\*
- Adult Tournaments/Other Tournaments
- Historical user groups in good standing
- Games are given scheduling priority over practices

#### **C. General Guidelines**

- In an effort to ensure county residents are safe and have a positive experience on County fields, athletic fields may be closed at the discretion of Gaston County Parks and Recreation if necessary. Fields can be closed due to bad weather, rehabilitation, safety issues, etc. Do not use fields during or after a heavy rain, or when wet or muddy.
- All athletic field users must abide by all Gaston County Parks and Recreation Ordinances, rules and regulations, and any local, state or federal laws and regulations applicable to the use of all fields.
- Misuse of a park or school field, or the failure to comply with park rules and policies is cause for revocation or denial of existing reservations and/or future applications.
- **Coaches must have a copy of their organizations awarded confirmations with them at all times for authorization of field use.**
- Parking at any Gaston County facility is permitted only in designated parking areas. Parking in grass areas is prohibited.
- Organizations must submit a light application for lights to be programmed at designated locations.
- Teams must police trash daily after use. All trash and debris must be removed from the infield, dugout, outfield, and fence areas and disposed of properly.
- Teams must replace turf divots at the end of each day to help re-root grass.
- No tarps or material that may damage the grass may be placed on turf.
- Damages discovered to County property must be reported in a timely manner to Parks and Recreation. This includes fences, players benches, bleachers, trash cans, or anything else needing attention.
- Structures of any kind cannot be built or installed without prior approval from Parks and Recreation.
- No pushing/spreading water is allowed within the infields or into the outfields.
- No chemical applications are allowed, including pesticides. Parks and Recreation reserves the right to cancel any allocation to accommodate the needs of Gaston County Parks and Recreation and County sponsored events.
- User groups are responsible for excessive use or damage to County fields, equipment, and property. If additional maintenance is required after an activity (in excess of routine service/time),

the assigned user group may be charged accordingly. Failure to pay for additional maintenance caused by excessive use or damage may result in the immediate loss of existing field reservations and/or the refusal of future requests.

- No person shall grill or cook food in parking areas. All cooking of food is limited to designated assigned eating areas (picnic shelters) in County parks.

**D. Vendors**

No one is allowed to sell any item at Gaston County Parks without prior approval. Vendors must complete an application for permission to sell and if approved, a permit will be issued. All Concession rights are retained by Gaston County.

**E. Alcohol Policy**

Field users are reminded that Gaston County Park Rules prohibit alcohol use on any facility owned or operated by the Gaston County Parks & Recreation Department. Violators of this rule will be subject to ticketing, as enforced by any law enforcement agency with territorial jurisdiction in Gaston County. Gaston County Parks and Recreation department may also require a law enforcement officer be present for future events (paid for at the field user's expense).

**F. Security**

Gaston County Parks and Recreation may require large tournaments/games to hire an off-duty law enforcement officer with territorial jurisdiction in Gaston County to be present at the facility/field. All high school football games are required to have at least one law enforcement officer present.

**G. Inclement Weather**

Please use good judgment.

Call 704-922-2163 from (8am-5pm) if you have questions about field conditions.

Gaston County Parks reserve the rights to cancel fields due to weather.

**H. Field User Responsibilities**

- Remit to the County the standard flat facility fees. All payments are to be made by the second Friday of each month of the completion of practices scheduled. The County rate will apply for all events. See fee schedule for all rates: light fees, practice fees, etc.
- The Field User agrees to abide by the Gaston County Park Rules and will take necessary steps to ensure that all participants, parents, spectators and others involved with the event follow the same rules.
- If a reservation day or weekend is rained out or cancelled for any reason it is the responsibility of the Field User to contact the Athletic Facility Coordinator the next business day via email or phone. **Otherwise all charges will apply.** Do not assume we know you didn't practice.
- In the event of extraordinary clean-up being required or damages to a facility due to neglect, inclement weather, or lack of control by the contractor, an additional fee (\$200) may be imposed at the discretion of the Director of Gaston County Parks and Recreation.
- Concession rights are retained by Gaston County. The Field User agrees to limit the number of coolers brought to the facility to (2) per team with no glass containers permitted.
- The Field User shall indemnify and save harmless the County, its agents and employees and assigns from and against all loss, cost, damages, expense and liability caused by and accident or other occurrences resulting in bodily injury, including death, sickness and disease to any person; or damage or destruction of property, real or personal; arising directly or indirectly from operations, products, or service rendered under this agreement.