

Policy for Allocating Field Time to Partner Organizations on Synthetic Turf Fields

Policy Rationale: Policy guidance is necessary to provide sufficient guaranteed use for groups willing to invest in funding the installation of synthetic turf fields while also providing opportunities to meet at least some of the unmet needs of other groups that meet specific requirements for the allocation of “partnered fields.” A clear policy would protect groups investing in fields by providing a guarantee of field space, while also ensuring that eligible community groups receive opportunities to play on the county’s high quality turf fields.

Policy Statement: NCS shall sign memoranda of understanding with eligible community sports organizations that provide a sufficient guaranteed use for groups willing to invest in funding the installation of synthetic turf fields while also providing a limited county “reserved time” during designated youth community use hours to meet at least some of the unmet needs of other groups that meet specific requirements for the allocation of “partnered fields.”

For turf field conversions fully funded by partners: provides first right of scheduling to contributing users for the majority of youth community use time (weekdays from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. and weekends from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.). A limited county “reserved time” of up to eight hours per week will be retained by the county to accommodate at least some of the growing demand for turf space.

For turf field conversions partially funded by partners: provides first right of scheduling to contributing users for youth community use time (weekdays from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. and weekends from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.). A limited county “reserved time” proportional to the amount of public funding will be retained by the county to accommodate at least some of the growing demand for turf space.

The reserved time is a *maximum*; in cases where other organizations’ turf field needs can be met on other fields, contributing users may actually receive up to 100 percent of the available time. NCS will strive to provide the contributing users as much time as possible, but may need to use the county’s reserved time for other eligible organizations when circumstances dictate.*

Specifically, NCS will employ the following criteria to schedule (if needed) the county’s reserved time to organizations including the partner organizations who meet the following criteria:

1. The sports organizations must be designated as a Certified Athletic Organizations (as defined by the Field Allocation Policy) that serve youth;
2. The sports organizations must have needs that cannot be met on comparable fields within their geographical areas either:
 - within their primary season under the Turf Field Allocation Guidelines; or
 - as required by the Field Allocation Policy (on adequate grass or synthetic turf fields).

* Equal consideration of unmet needs will be given to both partner and non-partner organizations.

Policy Requirements:

1. Use of the field during community use hours for Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) events and activities may not be extended beyond those times regularly used by FCPS on the field prior to conversion to synthetic turf.
2. In order to qualify as a contributing user and a partner in an MOU, a sports group must qualify to receive field allocations from NCS as a Certified Athletic Organization.
3. Contributing users will abide by the Field Allocation Policy and all allocated use of the synthetic turf field will count towards the user's overall allocation each season. The primary season designations of the Field Allocation Policy, however, may be superseded by the scheduling provisions of the MOU.
4. Contributing users will be responsible for all applicable NCS fees, including, but not limited to, application and non-county fees.
5. For at least 30 days prior to the signing of an MOU, and any amendment thereto, and preferably beginning at the notice of intent from a potential contributing user, NCS shall make public the intended partnership in order to gain feedback from the public. The notice shall identify the contributing user(s), the site(s), and any MOU provisions that are not part of the standard provisions prescribed herein, and any provisions that purport to supersede elements of the Field Allocation Policy. Among the issues NCS shall seek input on are the following:
 - a. Site location
 - b. Impact of field conversion
 - c. Potential funding partnerships
 - d. Viability of proposed partnerships
6. Facility Scheduling
 - a. The contributing organization may propose a schedule for their use of the field. NCS will determine the final allocation of the field and will strive to meet the partners request.
 - b. FCPS use of the field during youth community use time will be applied to the community use reservation time.
 - c. The county reserved time requirement is applicable to all scheduling seasons, year-round.
7. MOUs can only be modified by the unanimous consent of all MOU signatories.
8. Historical allocations of fields will be preserved to the extent possible. If a group that has historically had at least 50% of the use of a field is not included in a proposed MOU, that group must be notified immediately and the contributing users must identify a replacement field acceptable to NCS.
9. Design standards will be in accordance with Fairfax County Park Authority and FCPS guidelines. Exceptions should be considered in cases of unusual or non-standard field sizes or configurations.
10. Any MOU will be limited in duration to 10 years or the useful life of the field (as determined by independent review), whichever is less.
11. MOUs may be terminated by any party for material breach of another party's obligations under the MOU.