

Department Policy & Procedure

ACCESS & INCLUSION POLICY & PROCEDURES		Policy Number:	1229870V4
		Effective Date:	March 9, 2020
Department:	Parks & Recreation	File No.	15.3050.01-2018
Approved:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> City Council	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Department Administration	

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline Access & Inclusion rationale and options to reduce barriers and promote individual access to Parks and Recreation services.

AUTHORIZATION

This Parks and Recreation policy will be executed by Department staff.

INTERRELATED

This policy supersedes the Parks and Recreation Fees & Charges Policy and amalgamates and updates prior policies related to the Department's Financial Assistance Policy and Procedures, the Active Assistance Policy (149670) and the Accessibility Policy (86454). It is recognized that factors such as funding, facility design, specialized equipment and staff expertise may impact the Department's ability to safely and effectively serve all access and inclusion customers.

OBJECTIVES

To establish a framework for Departmental Access and Inclusion that:

- is fair, clear and serves customer and Department needs;
- recognizes and reduces barriers related to accessing Department services; and
- is based on a systematic, defensible approach.

DEFINITIONS

Active Passes – these are Admissions services where the customer pre-purchases multiple visits with a punch pass (i.e. 10 visit pass) versus single paid admission visits.

Admissions – services that are generally available to all members of the public or broad based subsets of the public, within a defined time period. Fees are normally remitted on a single occasion by occasion basis as the service is consumed.

Customer – refers to any person that purchases Department services at full or subsidized rates.

Department – means the City of New Westminster Parks and Recreation Department.

Financial Assistance – refers to any Parks and Recreation fee subsidy program or service that offers reduced (subsidized) fees to increase affordability and promote participation in Admissions, Active Passes and Registered Program Services for customers with financial limitations. There are several Financial Assistance Programs described within this Policy.

Household – means two adults and all dependents under 19 years old living at the same address.

Participant Assistant – means staff or community partner resources that support children and youth, ages 1 - 18 years with disabilities to participate in Department Registered Programs to ensure a safe and positive experience for everyone.

Resident – a Customer living in the City of New Westminster.

Referral Letter – means a paper or electronic submission, to the Department, from a non-profit social service agency, Youth Services, public or private school or government agency that states that the customer would benefit from financial support. Submission criteria are clarified in Attachment “A”.

Registered Programs – means services that are available to all users by means of pre-commitment (registration) for a service with defined dates, times, enrollment capacity, instructor to participant ratios, and possibly, skill prerequisites.

Support Person – means a member of the public (i.e. a family member, friend, volunteer) that accompanies and assists a customer to participate in a Department service when the customer is unable to participate independently in a community recreation program (i.e. not a skill based progressive instructional program such as gymnastics, swimming or skating).

POLICY INTENT

Parks and Recreation offers a variety of Access & Inclusion services to improve the quality of life for residents. By supporting those most vulnerable, wider benefits accrue to the entire community.

COMMITMENT

Parks and Recreation will endeavor to accommodate individual specific requests for extra support needs (i.e. Participant Assistant) without compromise to the quality and the safety of the program or its participants. In determining the ability to accommodate special support requests, designated staff consider factors such as:

- program safety and quality for all participants;
- staff to participant ratio's;
- staff availability and training;
- Collective Agreement and WorkSafe requirements; and
- facility and equipment amenities.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Financial Assistance will be implemented through a variety of programs and procedures that offer Customers the opportunity for subsidized purchases to promote year-round active living.

A. Registered Programs

Eligible Household Customers will receive fee discounts, up to 50%, on eligible Registered Program fees.

Customer Eligibility

1. Evidence of New Westminster residency; and
2. Submission of Referral Letter; or
3. Show staff a CRA Tax Assessment or Child Benefit Notice, dated within the past 12 months, that proves the Customer's Household annual income is below \$50,000.

Program Eligibility

All registered programs are eligible except if the Registered Program involves third party operator(s); already receives other subsidies or fee discounts; private or semi-private lessons; and/or involves transportation costs.

Procedures

1. Customer provides evidence of New Westminster residency and submits a Referral Letter that supports Customer's financial need to a Department Customer service staff member (or proof of Household annual Income per Customer eligibility criteria) during regular 'front desk' facility operating hours;
2. If Customer eligibility requirements are met, the staff member will:
 - a. Create the Customer account and add all Household members into the Department software;
 - b. Allocate 1,000 non-transferable credits to each Household member with a one-year expiry;
 - c. Immediately sell any eligible discounted services, using the credits to reduce the fee by up to 50%; and
 - d. File the Referral Letter into the Customer account (proof of residency or income is only displayed to a staff member and not retained by the Department).
3. Customers may reapply after one-year using the same process and criteria.

B. Membership Passes

Eligible Customers can receive up to a **50%** discount on the Active 10 Visit or the Active 30 Day Passes. Membership Pass sales are limited to one eligible Active membership at a time (Customers are not permitted to have multiple concurrent discounted passes). Customer eligibility requirements and procedures are the same as outlined in Registered Programs.

C. Admission Services

The Department will offer about 20 drop-in services per week with a reduced \$2.00 admission fee to encourage participation and promote a 'Try It' experience for swimming, skating, fitness, sports, etc. The discounted \$2.00 admission services are subject to change seasonally and are available to all Customers, of any age, without restriction.

D. Rentals, Concessions and Merchandize

There are no discounted fees associated to rentals, concessions and merchandise sales. Other Department services may also be ineligible for fee discounts.

E. Access Tickets

Access Tickets generally involve bulk sales to pre-approved qualifying social service agencies that offer mental health residential or transitional services in New Westminster. The agency will dispense the Access Tickets to their clients.

The agency is required to apply for Access Tickets by means of a one-time letter to the Parks and Recreation Administration Office to establish an agreement to purchase Access Tickets.

In limited situations, Access Tickets may be sold directly to individual customers referred (in writing) to Parks and Recreation by the Customer's case worker (i.e. Fraser Health Authority).

Access Tickets offer approximately 50% off the adult single admission fee and the Access Ticket fee is set as per the applicable rate set out in the Department's Fees and Charges Bylaw. Access Tickets grant access to any Department Admission service.

F. Support Person

Customers unable to independently participate in admission based programs may be accompanied by a Support Person. In such instances, the customer is required to pay the applicable Admission fee but the support person is granted free admission. It is expected that the support person actively assists their charge and not participate independently. Support Person eligibility is managed by the service provider's manager or designate.

G. Third Party Funding Sources

The Parks and Recreation Department will apply for to available third party funding programs that may promote increased participation in Department services while reducing customer financial barriers to participation (i.e. Canadian Tire Jump Start Program). In turn, the department may be obligated to appropriately apply any granting body's terms and conditions, which may limit customer eligibility beyond that established by Departmental policy.

Parks and Recreation will also help redirect customers to any social service agencies or funding bodies that may directly support individual customers.

ACCESS & INCLUSION

A. Community Service Partners

The Parks and Recreation Department will partner with volunteer Support Person's, agencies and granting bodies to support access and inclusion participation. Resources are subject to limitations, granting requirements and allotments. Such collaborations will increase access and inclusion for participants in Department services while ensuring a safe and fun experience in a community recreation setting.

Goals

- Share resources and knowledge between participants, community partners and Parks and Recreation to offer the best range of access and inclusion services.
- Create integration and social interaction opportunities that foster friendships and connections.
- Collaborate on strategies and integration techniques that promote a supportive and healthy environment for the participant.
- Adapt or modify activities to participant's abilities and needs.
- Demonstrated ability to communicate challenges and opportunities effectively with co-workers and parents.

Examples of Community Partners (subject to change)

1. Kinsight – may provide Participant Assistant resources for summer day camp and Discovery Playtime participants.
2. Kidsport & Canadian Tire Jumpstart Programs – may provide financial assistance.
3. BC Mental Health
4. Autism Community Training Society
5. Canadian Down Syndrome Society
6. The Cerebral Palsy Association of BC

B. Support Opportunities

As available resources permit, requests for Participant Assistance support may be accommodated using the following criteria:

1. Resident Customers may be entitled to a one-week full-day Summer Day Camp program Participant Assistance support through Kinsight based on Kinsight's available annual grant funding;
2. Customers are eligible for Participant Assistant support through the Parks & Recreation Department for a one-week full-day summer day camp program OR up to two-weeks participation in a half-day summer camp(s); and/or
3. Throughout the year, Customers may request Participant Assistant support for any Department skill development or community recreation program.

Customers receiving Participant Assistant support are required to pay for the service(s) in which they are participating.

C. Intake and Awareness Process

1. Customer service staff provides parents with an introduction letter that outlines the Department's commitment to access and inclusion as well as provides staff contact information.
2. The Recreation Program Supervisor liaises with the participant, caregiver or parent to share information and to review options.
3. The Recreation Program Supervisor completes the *Access and Inclusion Support Form* based on the type of service requested:
 - a. A Day Camp;
 - b. A Skill Development Program; and/or
 - c. A Community Recreation program.
4. Recreation Programmer or Supervisor or Coordinator completes the *Access and Inclusion Services Form* (see Attachment "B" & "C") and files into EDMS (PR Current year, Access & Inclusion Support Form, Child's first and last name) and puts an alert text reference, with active date (reviewed every 2 years), on the client's Account.
5. The Parent registers their child once the Recreation Programmer or Supervisor confirms that support is available.
6. Support information, agreed to by the parent, is shared with the Participant Assistant, associated leader or instructional staff.
7. All involved will contribute to the on-going evaluation of the support services, and participant's success, with respect to the program, instructor and other participants. The Recreation Program Supervisor will add up to date Progress Report information and may update the active date in the Alert Text.
8. Where a parent, participant or caregiver has not provided any background information on the participant, the Recreation Program Supervisor will place information on the client record referencing that staff have identified that the participant may require additional support for success.

D. Medical

Participants, parents and caregivers are to understand that Department staff have basic first aid training, however, staff do not possess medical skills, knowledge or expertise to support any advanced medical or first aid needs and that 911 or other professional support services will be used in such instances.

Participants, parents and caregivers are expected to provide the Department with any information that will help ensure the participants health, safety and enjoyment in our services.

E. Participant & Instructor Ratios

All programs follow the Department participant to instructor ratio standards. Participants using Participant Assistants will be included in this ratio.

APPENDIX "A"

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FORM

Financial Assistance Referral Letter

I am confirming that this New Westminster resident, and applicable household family members, are experiencing financial limitations and our agency is endorsing their access to the Parks and Recreation Financial Assistance Program.

Client Information

Name: _____

Address: _____, New Westminster, BC

Phone Number: _____

Referral Information

Referring Person: _____

Referring Title/Position: _____

Agency Name: _____

Agency phone: _____

Agency address: _____

Referral Form Submission Process

During Covid-19 & Recreation Facility Closures

Email the referral form to inclusion@newwestcity.ca. A staff member will then contact you to complete your account set up.

Questions?

For more information on the Parks and Recreation Access & Inclusion Policy and Program, please visit: newwestcity.ca/parks-and-recreation/about-parks-and-recreation

For a listing of recreation facilities and hours of operations, please visit: newwestcity.ca/parks-and-recreation/recreation



APPENDIX “B”

ACCESS & INCLUSION SERVICE FORM – Child & Youth



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DOCX.DRF

APPENDIX “C”

ACCESS & INCLUSION SERVICE FORM - ADULT



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1.DOCX.DRF