

# Corporate Policy and Procedure



Policy No. 08-01-01  
Page Page 1 of 10  
Effective Date 2011 10 12  
Supersedes 2005 04 30

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TAB: COMMUNITY SERVICES  
SECTION: COMMUNITY GROUPS  
SUBJECT: COMMUNITY GROUP SUPPORT PROGRAM

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**POLICY STATEMENT** The City of Mississauga (the “City”), through the Community Group Support Program, strives to develop mutually beneficial relationships that support community involvement by groups who provide services to all individuals, families and communities that live, work, and play in Mississauga.

**PURPOSE** The Community Group Support Program (the “Program”) is designed to assist not-for-profit community groups, governed by volunteers, who deliver arts, culture and heritage; recreation, sports and leisure; special events; and various social, environmental and special interest programs and services which exist for the benefit of the residents of Mississauga.

The Program will help volunteer community groups by providing access in a fair and equitable manner to specific City resources, such as meeting space and permission to place portable signs on City road allowances. The levels of assistance which can be provided are limited by available resources. Direct financial assistance is not provided as part of the Program.

This policy outlines the eligibility criteria to become formally recognized by the City as either an Affiliated Group or a Recognized Community Group; the available benefits for each; and the application and approval process.

## LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENT

Any collection, use and disclosure of information under this policy will be undertaken in accordance with the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

# Corporate Policy and Procedure



Policy No.	08-01-01
Page	Page 2 of 10
Effective Date	2011 10 12
Supersedes	2005 04 30

---

## ADMINISTRATION

The Community Group Support Program is administered by the Community Services Department.

## DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy:

“Commissioner” means the Commissioner of Community Services or his/her designate.

“Mississauga Resident” means anyone who lives permanently in Mississauga (temporary absences for reasons such as vacation do not affect resident status, as long as the resident’s principal address remains in Mississauga); a student who is registered in an educational institution in Mississauga and who lives and attends school in Mississauga for a period of at least eight months during the calendar year; or a non-resident who is the principal owner of a business in Mississauga and thereby pays Mississauga business taxes.

## CITY’S ROLE

The City’s relationship with volunteer community groups receiving assistance under this Program is one of support only. The City cannot be responsible for the decisions and/or actions of any group or its members. As a consequence, the City’s relationship with volunteer community groups is not an endorsement of the group’s beliefs or views, and the City will not act as a review body for any such group, or be seen to represent or imply any partnership.

## STAFF LIAISON ROLE

The staff liaison’s role is to determine the appropriate types and levels of services required by an Affiliated Group and to provide ongoing assistance and guidance. The amount of time spent with each group may vary, depending on the needs of the group. For example, staff liaisons may spend more time with a new or emerging group than with an established group. The staff liaison, in conjunction with other City staff as appropriate, monitors compliance to the affiliation agreement.

In keeping with the spirit of the City’s policy regarding conflict of

# Corporate Policy and Procedure



Policy No.	08-01-01
Page	Page 3 of 10
Effective Date	2011 10 12
Supersedes	2005 04 30

interest, the staff liaison may attend the group's Board of Directors meetings in a non-voting capacity. Where possible, staff liaisons will attend the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Affiliated Groups assigned to them.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

### Departmental Directors

All departmental directors are accountable for:

- ensuring all applicable managers/supervisors are aware of this policy and of any subsequent revisions; and
- ensuring compliance with this policy.

### Managers/Supervisors

Managers/supervisors of staff who are responsible for the administration of the Community Group Support Program are accountable for:

- ensuring staff in their respective work units are aware of this policy and any subsequent revisions;
- ensuring applicable staff are trained on this policy, and any subsequent revisions, with respect to their specific job function; and
- ensuring staff comply with this policy.

## INELIGIBLE GROUPS

Approval for inclusion in the Program as an Affiliated Group or a Recognized Community Group will not be provided for groups whose primary purpose, goals and/or objectives are:

- to promote a professional association or business opportunity;
- in conflict with the values, goals and objectives of the City as demonstrated by the City's decisions, actions, plans, by-laws, policies, programs, or otherwise; or
- to further the aims of a political party, promote a political doctrine, or persuade the public to adopt a particular view on a broad social question.

## ELIGIBLE GROUPS

Provided a group cannot be disqualified for any of the reasons outlined in the "Ineligible Groups" section, groups may receive

# Corporate Policy and Procedure



Policy No.	08-01-01
Page	Page 4 of 10
Effective Date	2011 10 12
Supersedes	2005 04 30

assistance as an Affiliated Group or as a Recognized Community Group.

Groups applying to be an Affiliated Group or a Recognized Community Group must also meet all of the criteria outlined in the Eligibility Criteria section below.

## Affiliated Groups

Eligibility for affiliated status is reserved for Mississauga-based groups that provide services which supplement the services provided by the City. Affiliated Groups must not duplicate the services, membership or geographic service area of an existing Affiliated Group, including those with a pending application, unless it can be demonstrated that an existing Affiliated Group cannot meet the community needs and that additional services are required and facilities are available.

## Recognized Community Groups

Groups who do not provide services which supplement the services provided by the City, such as condominium corporations, religious groups and service clubs, are not eligible for affiliated status but may apply to become Recognized Community Groups.

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA - AFFILIATED GROUPS AND RECOGNIZED COMMUNITY GROUPS

Groups applying to become an Affiliated Group or a Recognized Community Group must meet all of the following criteria:

1. The group must adhere to the Ontario Human Rights Code.
2. The group must have a written constitution and by-laws or operating guidelines establishing the framework within which the group will operate that includes:
  - an elected Board of Directors of not less than five members, with the majority of the Board being Mississauga Residents. Elected sub-groups operating under the umbrella organization would also adhere to this standard. (The applicable

# Corporate Policy and Procedure



Policy No.	08-01-01
Page	Page 5 of 10
Effective Date	2011 10 12
Supersedes	2005 04 30

Community Services Director, or his/her designate, may authorize an exception for regional groups)

- general membership of not less than 20 members
  - membership is open to all Mississauga residents and defined through a set process. The following membership restrictions may be permitted:
    - based on geographic location (i.e. ratepayer groups); however, membership must be open to all residents within the geographic area
    - based on skill level, facility limitations or age; however, the group may not close its membership if non-residents make up any portion of the membership;
  - a condition that all members must be eligible to vote (for children's or youth programs, adults representing those under the age of 18 must be eligible to vote)
  - a process through which the group holds an AGM at which the Board of Directors is elected from the general membership through a democratic election process
  - the process for disposing of assets upon dissolution of the group
3. At least 80 per cent of the group's members must be Mississauga Residents, with the following exceptions:
- registration cannot be closed to a Mississauga Resident if non-residents make up any portion of the membership
  - One hundred per cent of the player members of all minor sports groups, other than minor youth soccer groups, must be Mississauga residents.
  - Minor youth soccer groups are permitted only two percent non-residents, to comply with regional

# Corporate Policy and Procedure



Policy No.	08-01-01
Page	Page 6 of 10
Effective Date	2011 10 12
Supersedes	2005 04 30

- 
- and provincial governing body registration requirements.
- requests for exceptions must be made in writing to the group's staff liaison on an annual basis and will be considered, provided that registration of non-residents does not increase the demand for City facilities. Written approval of the sports group's executive is required before signing non-resident players and a detailed "Declared Non-Residents List" must be provided to the City. The staff liaison will make a recommendation to the applicable Director or his/her designate, who will then make the final decision.
  - 100 percent Mississauga Residents are required for ratepayer groups.
  - a minimum of 51 percent is required if the group is providing a service which does not supplement the services provided by the City or which does not otherwise exist within the City, and if the group cannot function without its non-resident members. Groups applying for affiliation must submit a plan of action to increase the percentage of Mississauga Residents to a minimum of 80 per cent within a time considered reasonable by the City.
4. The group must be able to provide financial statements of the previous operating year's expenditures and revenues, where applicable, and a budget for the next operating year, signed by two authorized signing officers or independent certified accounting firm or, for groups with expenditures over \$130,000, an audited financial statement
5. The group must have a statement of the group's purposes, goals and objectives and an overall schedule of events, programs and services

# Corporate Policy and Procedure



Policy No. 08-01-01  
Page Page 7 of 10  
Effective Date 2011 10 12  
Supersedes 2005 04 30

---

6. All outstanding debts to the City must be paid in full, or agreement reached regarding retirement of the debt, for the group to be granted Affiliated Group or Recognized Community Group status and access City services.

**APPLICATION PROCESS** Groups should contact Recreation and Parks, Community Services Department for an application. The application will clearly outline the required criteria and documentation for all volunteer community groups applying for the Program.

**Approval of Eligible Groups** Applications for eligible groups are approved by the appropriate Community Services staff who are responsible for reviewing and verifying applications for Affiliated Groups and Recognized Community Groups. Groups will be notified by Community Services staff to advise them of the outcome of their application.

**Maintaining Status** Affiliated Groups with an annual operating budget of over \$130,000 are required to submit an audited financial statement for the current fiscal year to Community Services on an annual basis. Otherwise, Community Services staff will request updated information from approved groups annually or as deemed necessary. In order to maintain status as an Affiliated Group or a Recognized Community Group, groups will be given an opportunity to identify any changes and/or asked to provide recent documentation with respect to the information submitted with their original application.

Groups will have up to 60 days from the date of the request to provide any required information or documentation. Failure to do so will result in the loss of either Affiliated Group or Recognized Community Group status unless, due to extenuating circumstances, an extension has been approved by the applicable Community Services Director or his or her designate.

## SUPPORT AND BENEFITS FOR ELIGIBLE GROUPS

The following represents the services available to an eligible

# Corporate Policy and Procedure



Policy No.	08-01-01
Page	Page 8 of 10
Effective Date	2011 10 12
Supersedes	2005 04 30

group:

- publicity assistance through:
  - inclusion in various City communication channels
  - permission to place portable signs on City road allowances (refer to Corporate Policy and Procedure – Portable Signs on Road Allowances)
- facility rentals and bookings:
  - booking of City community centre rooms at preferred rental rates, if applicable
  - use and delivery of equipment, subject to availability and payment of fees, if applicable
- Affiliated Groups only:
  - assignment of a staff liaison
  - provision of free facility meeting room space for a maximum of twelve executive/board meetings and one AGM per year, on a space-available basis and in accordance with the City's facility booking practices
  - booking of City parks and community centre rooms up to 12 months in advance at preferred rental rates, if applicable
  - a general liability insurance policy that protects the Affiliate Group's officers, directors and board members, volunteers and staff while acting in the scope of their duties (participants are not covered), against claims made by third parties for death, bodily injury, personal injury, and property damage or loss thereof

Note: This is not Directors' liability insurance

  - Affiliated Sports Groups:
    - priority booking of City outdoor sports facilities, with first priority given to youth sports groups;



# Corporate Policy and Procedure



Policy No.	08-01-01
Page	Page 9 of 10
Effective Date	2011 10 12
Supersedes	2005 04 30

- priority booking of City ice and arena floors, in accordance with Corporate Policy and Procedure – Prime Time Ice Allocation

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF ELIGIBLE GROUPS

Eligible groups are responsible for:

- operating on democratic principles and processes which are accountable to members and which can withstand public scrutiny;
- providing immediate notice to Community Services staff of any changes in the group's executive/board or constitution and date of their AGM; and
- providing information to Community Services Staff as requested.

### Termination of Affiliated or Recognized Community Group Status

Status may be rescinded by the applicable Community Service Divisional Director and future requests for assistance may be denied if the group no longer meets the criteria outlined in this policy; provides fraudulent or misleading information to the City; acts in contravention of this policy or violates any provincial or federal legislation or municipal by-law; has a ruling against it from the Ontario Human Rights Commission; or is involved in a claim or legal action against the City.

Groups may terminate their Affiliated or Recognized status at any time. Requests must be made in writing and must be signed by the group's executive members. Requests from Affiliated Groups must be sent to the staff liaison; requests from Recognized Community Groups must be sent to the Community Services Department. Contact information is available on the City's web site.

## REPORT TO COUNCIL

On an annual basis, in advance of budget deliberations, a report will be prepared by Community Services staff outlining the value of services provided to Affiliated and Recognized Community

# ***Corporate Policy and Procedure***



Policy No.	08-01-01
Page	Page 10 of 10
Effective Date	2011 10 12
Supersedes	2005 04 30

---

Groups (i.e. facility rentals and staff time) and will be presented to Council for their information.

**REFERENCE:**

GC-0256-2005 – 2005 04 27

October, 2007 - Administrative Revision - Change of responsibility for ratepayer applications from Communications Division to Recreation and Parks Division.

GC-0610-2011 – 2011 10 12

**LAST REVIEW DATE:**

October, 2011

**CONTACT:**

For more information, contact the staff liaison assigned to the group, or Recreation and Parks, Community Services Department.