

City of Richmond Community Services - Recreation Division Fee Waiver Policy

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of the draft fee waiver policy is to establish fiscally responsible guidelines to equitably evaluate and consider fee waiver requests for one-time events or temporary uses of City facilities and parks. These guidelines establish parameters for waiving outdoor park or indoor facility use fees for community-wide events and activities which benefit the public for special events or temporary uses. For purposes of this policy, the term “fee waiver” is the granting of a reduction or dismissal of a required fee normally charged for the use of a City-owned facility or park.

II. POLICY

The Community Services Department-Recreation Division (Recreation) recognizes the value of working with and supporting organizations to provide services and programs that benefit the Richmond community. Recreation strives to be an exceptional steward over City facilities, parks, and funding for programs and services. Charging fees is a standard practice in the Recreation and Parks industry when individuals, private groups, government or non-profit groups wish to reserve and exclusively utilize public facilities. Fees charged for programs and facility/park usage help cover the cost of providing such services and maintaining facilities. This policy is established for determining when applicable City and Recreation fees (e.g., application, facility use, permit and other departmental charges) established by the City of Richmond’s Master Fee Schedule may be waived.

Scheduling and use of facilities and events are subject to availability of requested facilities and do not have preference over City programs and activities or previous commitments. The policy is effective to the extent a fee waiver can be considered without negatively impacting the City’s or Recreation’s budget or current operations.

III. ELIGIBILITY

Fees may be waived when such action is determined by the City of Richmond to be in the best interest of the City of Richmond, our residents, and the service applicant. Eligible organizations include the following:

- 1) Intergovernmental Cooperation
- 2) Non-Profit Organization
- 3) Official City of Richmond Partner (Per Approved Partnership Policy)
- 4) City of Richmond Co-Sponsored Event

Intergovernmental Cooperation

Fees may be waived for events or temporary uses when the applicant is another government agency and the use is related to the performance of its normal functions and is a benefit to Richmond residents.

Non-Profit Organization

A fee waiver may be approved for eligible non-profit organizations, including organizations with a non-profit fiscal agent, that is tax-exempt under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code.

Examples of organizations that could receive possible fee reduction or waivers include:

- Established Richmond Neighborhood Councils for monthly neighborhood council meetings and/or events.
- Events organized by groups with a current Adopt-a-Spot agreement and evidence of active participation in the program.
- Organizations funded by the Community Services Department/Recreation Division and City Manager's Office, Economic Development Love Your Block Mini-Grant program and organized by groups with active grant agreements.

Official City of Richmond Partner

An official partner is an organization or individual that has completed the Partnership Policy process with the City of Richmond. These partners have demonstrated actions to provide a needed benefit to the community and therefore are eligible for fee waivers for the program delineated in the Partnership Agreement. All fees charged and/or reduced or waived will be listed in the Partnership Agreement. Any additional activities and associated requests for reduced or waived fees requested on behalf of the recognized partner would cause an amendment to that Agreement and would be subject to review and approval.

Department Sponsored Program

Fees may be waived for events and programs that are sponsored or co-sponsored by the City. The organization/agency requesting sponsorship by the City has a 501(c)(3) status, the program must benefit the Richmond community, and no event fees shall be charged. Appropriate recognition as Sponsor or Co-sponsor of the event or program is provided for the City of Richmond on all promotional materials and at the event or program. All resources provided by the City in sponsorship of the event (fee waiver or in-kind service) must be provided for within the Department's current budget allocations without a reduction or increase of services or costs.

IV. ELIGIBLE AND INELIGIBLE USES

Eligible Uses:

- Application fees, certain permit fees, and/or facility use/rental fees may be eligible for waiver through this policy.
- Fee waivers are available for a variety of events including sporting, cultural, general, and major community events, as long as the event meets the criteria set forth in this policy.
- Organizations can receive up to \$5,000 in fee reductions or waivers within a 12-month period.

The following fees cannot be waived under this Policy:

- Staffing or labor costs (i.e. overtime for staff working outside of normal operations), security costs, utility reimbursement costs, deposits for damages to facilities, refuse removal cost, custodial costs, maintenance costs, and other applicable department costs
- Insurance or other fees as required by the City and/or ordinance
- Liquor license, food permits and health permits
- City of Richmond business license fees

The following projects and events are ineligible:

- Organizations based outside City of Richmond (unless the demonstrated benefits are primarily to the residents of Richmond)
- Activities primarily of a fundraising or charitable nature unless the funds directly benefit City-owned facilities and/or programs.
- Events or activities that are not open to the public
- Events that are political in nature or by individuals seeking political office or elected officials for the purpose of an election campaign
- Religious organizations seeking space or facilities for religious services
- Commercial events
- Corporate events
- Family or social gatherings
- Events that provide no community benefit
- Trainings that charge for participation
- Projects or organizations who have failed to fulfill their obligations during previous events or activities for which Community Services Department/Recreation Division facility permit fees were waived or reduced
- Events at the Richmond Convention Center (Auditorium) or the Richmond Aquatic Centers (Richmond Plunge or Richmond Swim Center)
- Events scheduled that would conflict with already planned City of Richmond community events (e.g., 3rd of July).

V. PROCEDURES

1. Review the Fee Waiver Policy and Complete the Fee Waiver Application and Facility Reservation Permit (provides an estimate of the requested facility use fees).
2. Submit the Application, Permit, and the following required documents to Recreation per the specified schedule. The request must be submitted by an authorized representative.

Required Documents:

- a. Applicant's non-profit organization documents or any other documents as may be required to show the applicant's organizational paperwork.
- b. Appropriate insurance documents
- c. Applicant's financial statement showing revenues and expenses
- d. Any other documents that may be required and requested by the Recreation Division.

3. If the request involves approval from another City of Richmond department, the request will be forwarded to that department.
4. Fee waiver applications will be assessed and reviewed based on the requirements listed in this document by an internal city panel (consisting of staff from the City Manager's Office, Community Services and Finance) and the Recreation Deputy Director based on the timeline published in this document.
5. Based on review and scoring by the internal city panel, the Recreation Deputy Director will make a recommendation to the Director of Community Services for final approval or denial.
6. The Director of Community Services will make the final decision regarding a fee waiver request and the applicant will be notified of final decision per the specified schedule, and if approved and applicable, will submit a Special Event Permit.
7. Within forty-five (45) days of completion of the event for which a fee waiver was given, the organization should provide a written report to the Recreation Division, to include at a minimum the number of participants, event revenue and expenses, and a description of the benefit to the City.
8. Failure to abide by the rules and procedures as set forth in this document may result in the respective permittee being denied the current and any future fee waiver requests. Organizations that fail to cancel the approved event less than 30 days before their scheduled event and/or that fail to abide by the guidelines and requirements set forth in this policy may forfeit their ability to request future fee reductions or waivers or enter into Partnerships with the City for the following twelve (12) months.

VI. ACKNOWLEDGMENT & MARKETING

All recipients of a fee waiver or reduction shall acknowledge the City of Richmond in all publicity relating to the event or activity. Acknowledgement includes City of Richmond logos and statements in all advertising and promotional material, media releases and in other promotional contexts. Promotional opportunities should be detailed in the event application.

VII. FACILITY FEE WAIVER CRITERIA

In determining if a fee waiver is warranted, the following criteria may be considered:

Organization Structure and Experience

- Be offered by an eligible organization
- Organization serves the Richmond community
- Level of organization's experience producing events/programs in Richmond

Application Completeness and Compliance

- Application is complete and all required documents are submitted by the stated deadline
- The event or program is in compliance with the City's non-discrimination policy
- The organization is in good financial standing with the City
- There is no evidence of previous violations of the Fee Waiver Policy (organizations that violate this Policy or present false information about their event or program may not be eligible for fee waivers)

Event or Program Design and Community Benefit

- Description of event and proposed impact on community
- Event or program demonstrates a general public benefit to Richmond residents
- Organization offers activities or events associated with the Division's mission
- Organization offers an event or programs that are not available through Recreation or another City department
- Event or program is open to the entire public at no charge
- Organization is collaborating with any other entities
- Marketing and outreach plan is clearly articulated
- The proposed event or program will have no significant impact on the facilities or department activities, that the permittee will provide volunteer services and materials to mitigate any impacts created by the event or program, or that the impacts are adequately offset by the public benefit provided by the program or event

Required Resources and Budget

- Level of and reason for fee waiver request (above what is approved via the Master Fee Schedule)
- Organization budget provided
- The organization must submit their policy showing that they do not deny participants/players due to their inability to pay registration or participation fees
- The imposition of fees would create a financial hardship on the organization or would have a detrimental effect upon the services provided to the public

VIII. FEE WAIVER APPLICATION SCHEDULE

In order to fully support the success of your event, Recreation staff asks that organizations submit the Fee Waiver application and all applicable documents by the dates outlined in the schedule below. This schedule provides both City staff and organizations sufficient time to adequately plan for events. It also ensures that the Special Event Permit is routed to internal and external departments/entities with sufficient time and allows for staff to review all required documents well in advance of scheduled events. Requests may be denied if organizations fail to meet these deadlines.

<u>Quarter</u>	<u>Event Start Month</u>	<u>Application Due</u>	<u>Approval/Denial Notification</u>
Quarter 1	January February March	October 1 st	November 1 st
Quarter 2	April May June	January 1 st	February 1 st
Quarter 3	July August September	April 1 st	May 1 st
Quarter 4	October November December	July 1 st	August 1 st

IX. PROPOSED APPLICATION COMPONENTS

The City of Richmond recognizes the value of partnering with other agencies and organizations in providing services that benefit the community and its residents. In order to request a waiver of fees, organizations must complete an application and submit it with necessary documentation to the Recreation. Components of a proposed application are below:

- Organization Information – Contact information, type of organization (government, non-profit, co-sponsor, etc.), organizational financial information
- Event Information – event description, event purpose, list of activities that will take place, list of fees being charged, time and date of the event, indicate the specific facility(ies) for which a fee waiver is requested, projected attendance, promotion and outreach plans, collaborating organizations, etc.
- Fee Waiver Request – How does event benefit Richmond community, explanation of why fee waiver is being requested, amount of waiver being requested and explanation as to why, and how event fees would create a financial hardship