

# **W.M. Sobey Indoor Sports Complex**

## **Allocation Project Final Report**

**Describe the current practices, identify best practices, and develop a facility allocation policy  
and implementation plan**

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## **Executive Summary**

Highland District Soccer Association (HDSA), owner and manager of the W. M Sobeys Indoor Sports Complex identified that the Complex could benefit from developing a formal facility allocation policy to establish a transparent and consistent method to allocate facility time to user groups.

The HDSC hired consultants to describe the current state of facility booking and allocation, identify best practices in Nova Scotia and beyond, and develop a facility allocation policy and implementation plan based on local conditions that reflects the values of the facility and the needs of the community.

The policy was developed through consultation via online surveys, focus groups and interviews with current, past and potential user groups, Complex staff and HDSA board members. Once drafted, the policy was validated and edited through a survey and focus groups, with many of the same organizations and individuals who helped with the policy development.

Highlights from the facility allocation policy include:

- Guiding principles for allocation;
- Guidelines for allocation of space and ranking of priority user groups;
- Clear internal and external booking procedures (forms, timelines, meetings etc.);
- Clear organisation for fees and other charges and facility regulations.

To compliment the facility allocation policy a number of other recommendations were made. These recommendations spanned organizational effectiveness work, marketing and user feedback mechanisms.

The HDSA should be proud to have committed to developing and implementing a facility allocation policy. The facility allocation policy can be a living document, reviewed annually to account for changes in board principals and user group expectations.

## **Introduction and Background**

The W. M Sobeys Indoor Sports Complex (hereafter referred to as Complex) is located in Stellarton, Nova Scotia and is owned and managed by the Highland District Soccer Association (HDSA), a non-profit organization promoting soccer in the region. The Complex was originally designed and built to primarily serve soccer associations in the area but has expanded its user group base to include various sports, activities, parties, recreational services and more.

Due to COVID-19, community sport groups who had previously utilized school gyms/spaces to offer their programs had very limited selection for the 2021 indoor season. The Complex installed a modular court floor over 1/3 of the turf section as a pilot project for the 2021 winter season. This pilot serves as a 'proof of concept' to determine if the interest exists within the community to utilize the Complex as a long term facility for a group of sport club activities (volleyball, basketball, badminton) and other community fitness activities who had not previously utilized the facility.

As part of the modular floor pilot project it was identified that the Complex could benefit from developing a formal facility allocation policy to establish a transparent and consistent method to allocate facility time to user groups. The policy can support staff by providing guidelines and priority of groups/activities when scheduling activities at the complex. The policy can also inform user groups on the booking procedure and rationale.

The HDSC hired consultants to describe the current state of facility booking and allocation, identify best practices in Nova Scotia and beyond, and develop a facility allocation policy and implementation plan that is based on local conditions and reflects the values of the facility and the needs of the community.

## **Highlights from Community Engagement about the Current Situation**

The consultants collected data from current, past and potential user groups, Complex staff and Highland District Soccer Association Board members through an online survey, focus groups and interviews.

The Allocation Policy Survey received 26 responses from community sport organizations, schools, municipalities, commercial renters and a long term care home. These user groups serve a wide variety of ages and all genders. The majority of responses came from those who are responsible for scheduling activities for their organization. The most common uses of the facility by the user groups are competitive sports, active living and recreation. The most popular booking frequency of user groups is weekly and seasonal with the majority of user groups looking for availability anytime over the weekend or during weekday evenings (5:00pm-10:00pm). Most user groups are satisfied with their current amount of facility time and the majority are booking the full turf or half turf. The current booking process was rated 3.4 out of 5 stars with the booking preference being by email. User groups reported being satisfied with their experience at the Complex. There is room for improvement regarding accessibility of first-aid kits within the building.

A meeting was held with Complex staff to discuss current booking procedures. Complex staff prefer to serve long term user groups with multi-week or seasonal bookings and annual events that do not require staff support. They use word of mouth and the radio as their main marketing strategies. There is no existing policy for booking procedures. Although the current process works for the staff person responsible for scheduling bookings, it is not a formal process and needs to be structured. Complex staff are supportive of creating policies that streamline the booking process and that will help mitigate avoidable issues Complex staff have experienced (Facility Allocation Policy, Storm Day Policy, Rental Rate Policy, etc.).

Highland District Soccer Association Board Members met with consultants to discuss their vision for the Complex and the online survey results. Board members were generally not surprised about the survey results, but expressed interest in connecting with user groups who wish to book more facility time and user groups who have experienced issues while communicating with staff. When Consultants described a Facility Continuum with municipally owned, publicly funded facilities that used principal drive decision making on one end and privately owned, for profit facilities that serve user groups on a first come first

serve basis on the other end, board members were of the opinion that the Complex falls somewhere in the middle. It is a privately owned facility that operates for profit in order to remain fiscally responsible, but a first come first serve booking procedure would not work for their client base. The organization wants to serve sport, recreation and physical activity user groups, however to remain fiscally responsible they must serve other user groups as well.



A focus group was held with local municipalities to discuss past, current and future municipal connections to the Complex. The municipalities use several facilities throughout Pictou County for recreational programming and events. Some municipalities have past and current bookings at the Complex and have contributed financially to the facility. The municipalities have recreation and/or active living strategies that identify priority populations they serve. These priority populations often face barriers to physical activity participation, specific barriers faced at the Complex include transportation, cost, management and communication. Suggestions for mitigating these barriers include prioritization of community use and partners who have contributed financially to the facility, a mutual understanding of the needs of the community and that the facility was built for physical activity use and accessibility.

Three user group meetings were conducted with local municipalities, soccer clubs from the Highland Region and non-soccer community sport organizations that book time at the Complex to review the draft policy and collect feedback. User groups agreed that the facility is a great asset to the community and sport court users would like the court to remain an option at the Complex. However, user groups have experienced issues with miscommunication related to booking procedures in the past. The user groups feel that an allocation policy will help resolve these miscommunication issues. Suggestions for the allocation policy include: adding a definitions section and having a visible public schedule for transparency and efficiency and an inclement weather policy. User groups expressed concerns regarding seasonal allocation seasons and registration deadlines as well as paying upfront for seasonal bookings (user groups currently pay monthly invoices). However, user groups would appreciate a seasonal invoice that reflects the total seasonal costs at the beginning of their respective seasons.

Complete survey results, meeting and focus group data is located in the Appendix.

## Best and Promising Practices

A policy is a deliberate system of principles to guide decisions and achieve rational outcomes. It is a statement of intent, and is implemented as a procedure or protocol. Policies are generally adopted by the governing body of an organization. An Allocation Policy is used by organizations to guide the successful ongoing management of their resources. A Facility Allocation Policy and the associated procedures and guidelines address the demand and supply of facilities, changing user demographics, and the successful ongoing management of such resources.

The objectives usually are to:

- establish a transparent and consistent process for booking a facility;
- guide the facility to operate in a fiscally responsible manner;
- ensure the benefit of the intended user groups;
- recognize the need for flexibility;
- balance the needs of user groups, casual participants and community members.

The following guiding principles will be considered when implementing and/or interpreting this policy:

- Efficiency: policy to ensure an effective, efficient and proper use of facilities;
- Demand: facility allocation will consider both the demand for and supply of facilities and where appropriate will employ a formula that takes into account user groups' actual current and substantiated future facility demand and will consider the proportionate number of participants in groups requesting facilities;
- Safety: safety issues will be considered when allocating and scheduling facility time to groups.
- Functional Requirements: the policy and the process of facility scheduling will consider (as possible) the functional requirements of groups by considering physical amenities of facilities and related on-site equipment in terms of the ability to meet user needs.

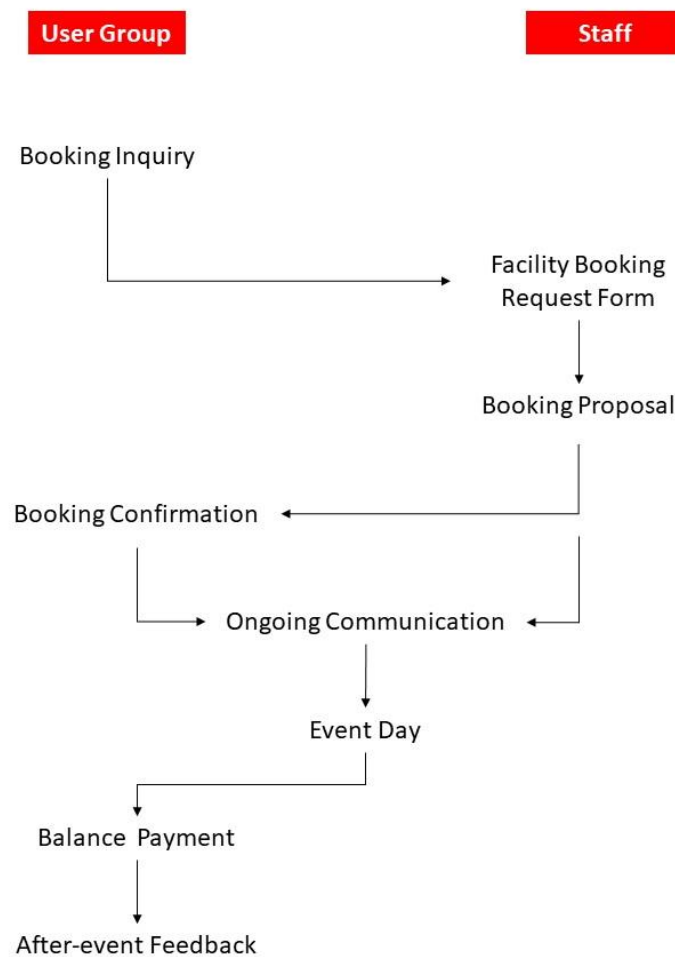
The policy development process includes:

- Reviewing current practices;
- Surveying facility user groups;
- Hosting focus groups with key stakeholders;
- Conducting interviews with staff & board;
- Completing a scan of best practices in the sector.

## Booking Process

A full description of the booking process, from both client and staff perspectives, is included in the Appendix. We recommend that all the communication between client and staff be registered and saved for future consultation. Keeping track of clients' history will help to improve the process and the relationship with clients.

The visual road map below exemplifies the overall booking process, with the main steps required from clients and staff. Recurrent booking and special formats will be taken into consideration, but the basic steps below should be followed in order to guarantee fairness and transparency to the process.



## Next Steps

Board approval of the Allocation Policy, Internal Booking Process and External Booking Process.  
Suggestions

## Opportunities for Further Work

In preparing this document several opportunities for future work arose. The suggested work could strengthen the purpose, the organizational effectiveness, and the financial sustainability of the HDSA and Complex.

Opportunities for foundational work include:

- Developing a mission statement and values. These will help guild the HDSA board decisions and show the community that the association and Complex have a clear purpose;
- Strategic planning, assessing both where the association and Complex are and where they would both like to be;
- Financial planning, evaluating the financial sustainability of the Complex with primary reliance on physical recreation and without the Highland District model that was under Soccer Nova Scotia.

Opportunities for ongoing work include:

- Annual survey to all user groups to assess user satisfaction and identify areas of improvement;
- Establish partnerships with local municipalities and schools to develop programs for week day/midday time slots and for squash court use to maximise the use of all rental spaces;
- Review the current “wall of sponsors” and signage and negotiate an annual fee for local businesses interested in advertising in the space;
- Avoid visual clutter by creating a branding project for the available spaces for advertising.
- Review the Facebook page to include basic information about booking;
- Review the website - content and format - to ensure that information is available for both people looking to book the facility and/or enroll in one of the activities;
- Establish a not for profit and a commercial user group fee structure;
- Establish a fee structure for user group equipment storage;
- Establish a fee structure for Complex equipment rentals.



## Appendixes

1. [Facility Use & Allocation Policy](#)
2. [Project methodology](#)
3. [Focus Group with Pictou County Municipalities](#)
4. [Survey and interview summary report](#)
5. [Internal booking process](#)
6. [External process process](#)

### Appendix 1: Facility Use & Allocation Policy

**Category: Operations**

**Responsibility: Facility Manager, Indoor Sports Complex  
Executive Director, Highland District Soccer Association**

**Adoption Date: To be Defined by HDSA**

#### 1. Purpose/Reason for Policy

- a) To establish guidelines under which the Facility Manager, under the supervision of the Executive Director, will allocate, distribute and administer the use of its space, facilities and equipment in a way that is efficient and transparent;
- b) To share the rate schedule and identify costs that will be charged to user groups for use of space, facilities and equipment, operated by the Highland District Soccer Association (HDSA);
- c) To establish policies for the use of space and facilities operated by the HDSA.

#### 2. Scope of this Policy

This policy applies to all the physical spaces operated by the HDSA, which are available to book and applies to all individuals and groups who may book these spaces (either at a cost or no charge).

#### 3. Policy Statement

All individuals and groups booking spaces for rent (or at no cost), which are operated by the HDSA, must adhere to the procedures and guidelines outlined in the *Facility Use & Allocation Policy*.

#### **4. Guiding Principles**

- a) To maximize the use of facility space;
- b) To prioritize the allocation of facilities by preferred activity;
- c) To be fiscally responsible;
- d) To allocate consistently and fairly, available facility space to user groups;
- e) To provide safe and accessible services for all user groups.

#### **5. Definitions**

The following definitions apply to this policy:

*Seasonal Allocation Period:* through tracking of rental patterns, user groups rarely book for the entire year and often fall into seasons of use. There are four seasons that are described in Section 6.1; Fall, Winter, Spring & Summer

*Non-profit organizations:* includes community sport organizations, schools, and municipalities

*Commercial events:* bookings that are being organized by for-profit enterprises or are for the express purpose of generating revenue for a business

*User Group:* organization/entity that is submitting the request for use of the facility

#### **6. Reservations & Booking Procedures**

##### **6.1 Seasonal Allocation Periods**

The calendar year has been divided into four seasons. All User Groups must submit the Facility Booking Request Form by the designated date to be included in the assignment process.

**Fall Allocation Period: November to December**

Submit request by October 1st

**Winter Allocation Period: January to February**

Submit request by December 1st

**Spring Allocation Period: March to May**

Submit request by February 1<sup>st</sup>

**Off-Season Allocation Period: June to October**

Submit request by May 1<sup>st</sup>

Users Groups interested in multiple season usage, can submit their request at the earliest intake. The Facility Manager will check in with the User Group at the beginning of each season to confirm that the details of the original request remain correct.

6.2 Reservation Review Process

All potential users of the Sobey Indoor Sport Complex shall be required to submit Facility Booking Request Form to the Facility Manager by email to [complex@highlandsoccer.ca](mailto:complex@highlandsoccer.ca)

A weekly schedule and special events schedule shall be prepared from the requests that were received.

A seasonal **User Group Meeting** will be held before the beginning of each season, to discuss the upcoming activities and resolve any scheduling conflicts that might exist. Final negotiations will occur at the meeting to finalize the upcoming seasonal schedule. A final schedule will be circulated to all groups within one week following the meeting. Contracts will be issued thereafter.

Any unresolved conflicts arising from the schedule shall be reviewed by the Executive Director. Each group involved with the sport facility request conflict will submit, in writing, to the Executive Director the rationale for their requirement. The following factors may also guide the final decision:

- User group historical use allocation;
- The degree in which the user group's time request has been met, apart from the conflict;
- The type and age of the user group as it relates to the period of time in conflict;
- If sport, the requirements of the activity involved. This would include requirements of governing sport bodies and logistics involved;
- The impact on fiscal operations.

### 6.3 Short Notice Requests

Reservations with less than **ten (10) days** advance notice will be accepted, if resources allow.

## 7. Guidelines for Allocation of Space

7.1 The W M Sobey Indoor Sports Complex was built as a training facility for soccer and other sports during the winter months. Even in the early days, it was acknowledged that a variety of users would be necessary to sustain its financial viability.

Using the process outlined in Section 6, preference for bookings shall be given as follows:

- a) Non-profit organizations that offer soccer programming that spans a full season (see seasonal allocation periods in Section 6.1);
- b) Non-profit organizations that offer other sport and active recreation programming that spans a full season;
- c) Regular annual tournaments and special events;
- d) Individual/private/internal bookings for social connection & celebrations;
- e) Commercial events.

Request for facility use from other organizations for purposes beyond what is listed here will also be considered based on the remaining availability.

## 8.0 Fees & Charges

### 8.1 Rental Fees for Facility Space and Equipment

The charges that user groups are required to pay when making use of Indoor Sports Complex are determined based on the category of the user group as defined under Section 7.0 above.

The current fee structure is established under a separate policy and is posted and maintained on the W M Sobey Indoor Sports Complex website at <http://www.sobeysportscomplex.ca/>.

GST-HST is charged for all complex rentals, with the exception of any activities where the participants are considered members of the HDSA and are youth age activities, with such activities exempt from GST-HST.

## 8.2 Equipment Rental

Additional equipment fees may be charged for items such as tables and chairs, sports equipment, and audio/visual equipment. Requests for the use of equipment must be included in *the Facility Booking Request*. Equipment fees will be assessed based upon group size and requirements.

## 8.3 Set-up & Labour Charges

Set-up for space, including tables/chairs or other equipment, must be requested at time of booking. Additional fees will be assessed for events requiring set-up, based upon group size and set-up requirements. Any additional costs associated with a rental will be passed on to the renter. In addition to set-up fees, examples include custodial, security, supervisor or maintenance needs. Rentals outside normal operating hours of the Sobey Indoor Sports Complex will be charged for all staffing costs.

## 8.4 Mandatory Event Management

The HDSA reserves the right to require mandatory event management by Indoor Sports Complex staff at events or recreational/sport activities, based upon: expected attendance, nature of event, facility type, or security and public safety concerns. If it is determined that mandatory event management is required for a rental group, labour and other charges will be at the cost of the renter.

## 8.5 Custodial Services

Bookings that require additional cleaning or garbage removal, will have additional charges added to the contract, which will be at the cost of thereafter.

## 8.6 Audio-Visual Services

Any arrangements for audio & visual services are the responsibility of the user group. Any equipment or set-up that will be used in the W M Sobey Indoor Sports Complex must be communicated at the time of booking.

## 8.7 Catering

The complex possesses a Food Establishment License and staff have necessary certification to provide basic food services to clients. The Complex includes a small kitchen/canteen where food can be prepared and served. Users have the option to make arrangements with the complex to either provide catering services directly or through a third party. Alternatively, external catering service may be used, or individuals/groups may bring their own food/drinks into the W M Indoor Sport Complex.

It is expected that all catering service items will be removed from the facility at the completion of the event, or an additional clean-up fee may be assessed and applied to the final invoice.

## 8.9 Parking

Parking is available onsite at no charge. Additional services can be provided for an additional fee.

## 8.10 Use of Outside Contractors/Vendors

If any user wishes to utilize an outside vendor for event support (i.e. décor, lighting, sound, staging, tables and chairs, etc.), that vendor must be approved in advance by the Facility Manager. All outside contractors and vendors will be expected to satisfy mandatory insurance requirements or other requirements instituted by the HDSA. The HDSA reserves the right to refuse the use of any outside vendor at any time for any reason.

## 8.11 Proof of Insurance

If requested, the user shall maintain in force, at their expense and for the period of time it uses the facilities or equipment, a comprehensive general liability insurance policy in a form and with limits satisfactory to the HDSA, covering bodily injury and property damage, with inclusive limits of at least two million dollars per occurrence, which policy shall contain a cross-liability clause and name the HDSA as an additional insured. The user shall provide evidence of such coverage satisfactory to Facility Manager at the HDSA's request.

## 8.12 Rental Payment & Refunds

- a) Multi-Week/Seasonal Bookings
  - Require a payment schedule which will be included in the Facility Rental Agreement;

- All rental payments are due in full net at the day of the event (or last day of a booking where one or more dates are booked);
- b) Special Events
- Deposits of \$25 or 10% (whichever is greater) is required at the time of booking to confirm the rental agreement;
  - All rental payments are due in full at the day of the event (or last day of a booking where one or more dates are booked);
  - A fee of \$25 or 10% of the full rental fee (whichever is greater) will apply for cancellations made within 10 days of the scheduled booking.
- c) Payments
- Invoices can be paid by cash, etransfer, cheque, Visa or Mastercard. Any cheques returned “non-sufficient funds” will be subject to a \$40 administrative fee.

#### 8.13 Inclement Weather

If inclement weather occurs, and the W M Sobey Indoor Sport Complex closes, users will have the option of rescheduling. Users are responsible for notifying all participants if a booking or event is closed due to inclement weather.

The process for dealing with situations *when a User Group cancels their program* due to weather/road conditions will be included in their Facility Rental Agreement.

#### 8.14 Authority to Cancel

The HDSA reserves the right to cancel a booking and to revoke any rights and privileges that may have been granted for facility use to an individual or group at any time without cause, notice, penalty or payment.

#### 8.15 Statutory Holidays

The W M Sobey Indoor Sport Complex shall generally be closed to the public, annually, on Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year’s Day and Easter Sunday unless otherwise directed. On Christmas Eve and

New Year's Eve, facilities will be closed at 12 noon and rentals limited to booking no later than 11:00 a.m.

#### 8.16 Outstanding Fees

Any group that has an outstanding balance for rental fees prior to the start of a new season shall not be allowed any rental time until the account balance is paid in full or other payment arrangements have been made with the Executive Director.

#### 8.17 Fee Waivers to Support Local Charities

The HDSA will consider requests for facility rental fee waivers to provide in-kind support to local charitable organizations for events that support public health and safety, youth development, or local fundraising efforts.

In addition, fees may be reduced to reduce financial barriers for local organizations who work with the HDSA in support of an active, engaged and energized community.

The HDSA will grant complimentary space up to a maximum of three (3) registered charity organizations in each calendar year. Requests for complimentary space will be considered on a first-come, first-served basis. Any set-up requirements, cleaning, or staffing that may be needed for an event will be at an additional cost to the charitable organization.

Any such organization must follow the same seasonal booking procedures that apply to all bookings, but with a longer 3 months advance notice for any such activities. Additional services will be charged.

### **9. Safety and Access and Control**

#### 9.1 Additional Staff

Due to the many demands for facility use, and bearing in mind statutory requirements, the HDSA must always ensure the safety and security of all guests. The Facility Manager may request the provision of supervisory staff at their discretion or oversight for additional supervision by HDSA. Any costs associated with this will be the responsibility of the renter.



## 10. Facility Use Responsibilities

10.1 All individuals and groups booking spaces for rent (or at no cost), which are operated by the HDSA, must adhere to the procedures and guidelines outlined in the *Facility Use & Allocation Policy*, as well as provisions listed in the Facility Rental Agreement.

### 10.2 Access to Space

Individuals and groups may only access the facility space identified in their Facility Rental Agreement and during the scheduled time - no extra time will be offered before or after the event. If use of another facility space is needed at the time of the rental, this must be requested through the onsite staff and will be based on the availability of space and the discretion of staff. All charges for the additional space will be billed to the individual or rental group.

### 10.3 Smoke Free Facility

In accordance with the Smoke Free Places Act by the Province of Nova Scotia, the W M Sobey Indoor Sports Complex is a smoke-free facility.

<https://nslegislature.ca/sites/default/files/legc/statutes/smoke-free%20places.pdf>

### 10.4 Alcohol Usage

No alcohol is permitted on the premises, unless approved as part of the Facility Rental Agreement.

### 10.5 Pets

Pets are not permitted inside the W M Sobey Indoor Sports Complex, except for service animals or unless approved as part of the Facility Rental Agreement

### 10.6 Usage of Turf

Groups using the turf surface must abide by the guidelines outlined in Appendix A

## **11. Tournaments and Special Events**

The tournament or special events designated shall meet with the Facility Manager at least five (5) days before the tournament to ensure the facility use details are arranged and to ensure that information on needs are known.

The HDSA also has working agreements with various accommodation businesses in the area and can provide any such user group with assistance in blocking off a number of rooms at a discounted rate.

## **12. Policy Monitoring**

The Facility Use and Allocation Policy will be reviewed annually by staff. Any recommended changes will be presented for the HDSA's consideration by April of each year so changes can be communicated to users before the Fall allocation period.

Monitoring activities are completed to ensure the policy is meeting its intended purpose as stated in Section 1.

Monitoring activities could include:

- a) Reports on facility usage by preferred categories (Section 6);
- b) Fiscal success;
- c) User satisfaction survey;
- d) Feedback from Facility Manager & staff;
- e) Formal complaint mechanism.

### **Related Documents - references, for future implementation**

- Facility Use Request Form: <https://webforms.brant.ca/Community-Services-Facilities/Indoor-Turf-Request>
- Facility Rental Agreement: <http://gorgesoccer.ca/forms/Form-GorgeFacilityRentalAgreement-v20140325.pdf>
- User Code of Conduct: [City of Richmond BC - Sports Facilities Code of Conduct](#)
- Sobey Indoor Complex Fee Schedule

## APPENDIX "A"

### Responsibilities for Use of Artificial Turf Field

This guideline outlines responsibilities for individuals and groups renting the artificial turf field at the Sobey's Indoor Sport Complex.

#### Guidelines

- All users must respect the start and end times as outlined in their contract.
- Maximum cleat size of 13mm (1/2") or less for all activities.
- Rugby shoes must be fitted with safety studs.
- Moulded soccer shoes are recommended.
- Nothing may be inserted into the field (eg. Posts, poles, wickets, etc.)
- Teams should change in designated changerooms, not outside.
- All users must receive prior approval from the Facility Manager before bringing any portable nets or heavy equipment on the field (balls excluded).
- For safety and for the sport teams spectators/parents must watch from the viewing area on the second floor.
- No smoking, pets (other than service animals), bicycles, or skateboards permitted.
- No food, gum, or sunflower seeds on the field
- Help us keep our facility clean. Use the receptacles provided for garbage and recycling.

## Appendix 2: Project Methodology

The specific objectives of the project were as follows:

- Describe the current state of facility booking and allocation through interviews with staff and user groups, as well as through a user group survey;
- Review best practices for facility allocation;
- Synthesize the information collected into themes and recommendations based on local conditions and best practices and review it with the board;
- Draft an allocation policy and implementation plan;
- Validate the policy draft with user groups through focus groups and surveys, followed by the HDSA board;
- Create supporting documents (forms to apply for space, internal and external booking process documents).

1. **Describe the current state:** In order to describe the current state of facility booking and allocation both a survey and interviews were conducted with those that book the facility, staff, the board and user groups.

A survey was designed to collect information about the Complex clients such as their main use of the facility, the age groups and gender they serve, preferred usage, and whether they would like to utilize more time. The clients were then asked to evaluate the current booking process and user experience. There were twenty six responses from the survey from nine different user groups.

Three interviews were designed and conducted, one with key staff from the Complex to describe the current state of their facility allocation and booking. One interview was conducted with the HDSA board to gauge their thoughts around priority groups and Complex utilization. The third interview was conducted with four municipal recreation staff to collect information about how they view the barriers and opportunities that the facility presents.

Both the survey and interviews were synthesized and the information collected into themes.

2. **Synthesize best practices:** A literature review was conducted to establish best practices for both facility allocation in Nova Scotia and beyond. Key components of existing facility allocation policies, that suite local conditions were teased out to be used in the Complex's policy.

3. **Develop a facility allocation policy and implementation plan:** Based on local conditions and best practices, a draft facility allocation policy and implementation plan was drafted.
  
4. **Facility allocation policy validation:** Three focus groups were conducted to review and validate the drafted allocation policy and collect user feedback:
  - The three focus groups consisted of a municipal recreation (attended by six different municipalities), soccer (two clubs) and other sporting clubs (two clubs).
  - A survey was also sent to all user groups with questions concerning key aspects of the facility allocation policy. There were three survey responses (survey was sent to at least 30 user groups) .
  - The focus group and survey feedback was incorporated into the allocation policy before it was taken to the HDSA for validation.
  
5. **Final report:** A clear final report was written that included the synthesis of the interviews and the surveys, best practices, the facility allocation policy and implementation plan and supporting documents was delivered to the HDSA.

## Appendix 3: Focus Group and Interview Summary Report

### Focus Group with representatives from Pictou County Municipalities

#### Other facilities utilized by Municipalities:

- Trenton Rink
- Trenton Park Pavilion
- Stellarton Community Centre (Allan Park)
- Fire Halls
- PC Wellness Centre
- Westville Gym
- Westville Community Centre
- DeCoste Centre
- School gyms
- New Glasgow Community Centres

#### Have your municipalities contributed financially to the facility?

Yes, when it was built and through annual municipal grants.

#### Have you used this Facility for municipal programs in the past?

No – 2 / Yes – 2

#### Which programs?

After School Programs

Walking group

#### Main barriers for utilization:

- Transportation.
- Cost.
- Management.
- Communication.

#### Suggestions for mitigating barriers and increasing utilization:

- Prioritization of community use and partners who have contributed financially to the facility.
- Mutual understanding of the needs of the community and that the facility was built for physical activity use.
- Accessibility (visual, gender-neutral, physical, newcomers).

**Does your physical activity plan have priority populations? What are they?**

Let's Get Moving Nova Scotia Groups

Persons with disabilities

Women and girls

Low-income populations

Workplaces

Schools

Health care settings

## **Appendix 4: Survey with current and former user groups, sports and non-sport related.**

26 responses collected between February 3rd and February 26th, 2021.

### **The survey was sent to the following user groups/activities:**

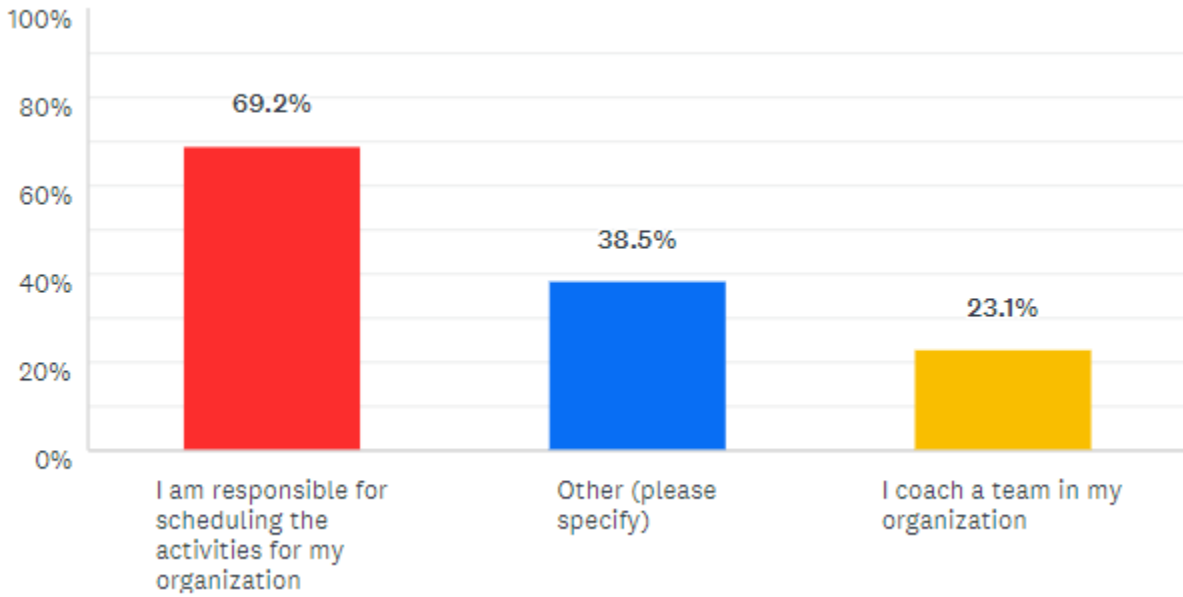
Active Pictou County  
Highland Tennis  
NNEC School Rugby  
NRHS School Rugby  
Pictou County Indoor Softball  
Pictou County Invasion Volleyball  
Pictou County Lacrosse Association  
Pictou County Lightning Basketball  
Pictou County Senior Soccer Club  
Pictou County Track & Field  
Pictou County Ultimate Frisbee  
Riverview Home-exercise  
Roller Derby  
Rugby  
Soccer - Antigonish Celtics  
Soccer - CC Riders Soccer Club - Truro  
Soccer - Fundy Youth Soccer Club - Amherst  
Soccer - Northern Nova United Soccer Club - Pictou Co.  
Soccer - Highland FC - Highland region  
Stellarton Albions Baseball  
Squash  
Team Mi'kmaw Nova Scotia  
Ultimate Frisbee  
U16 girls softball

### **The survey was also sent to non-sport related groups such as:**

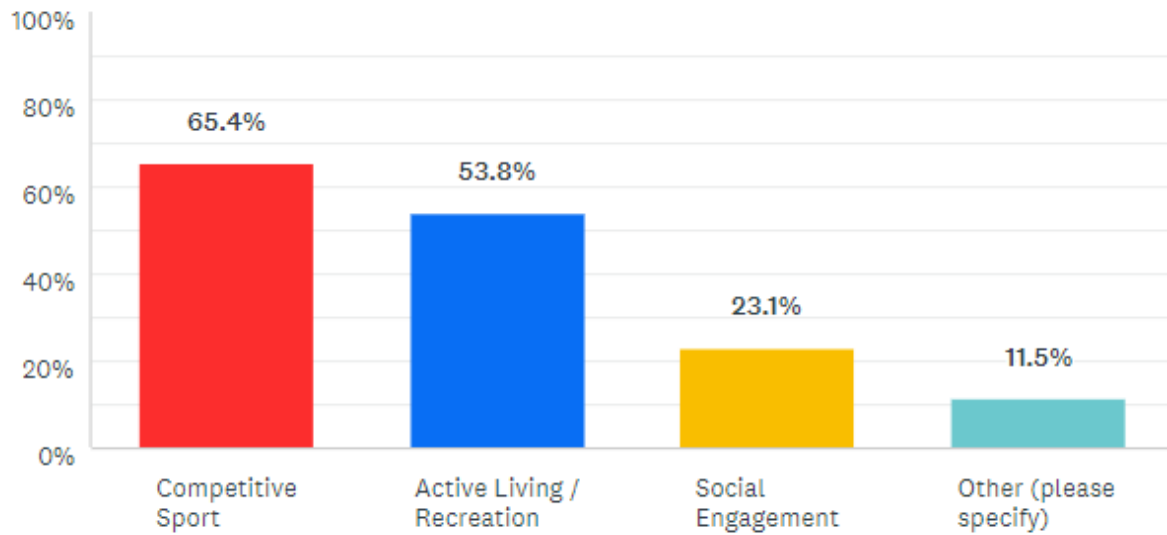
BH Inflatables  
Pictou County Homeschool Group  
Pictou County Kennel Club  
RedLine Agility  
→ We didn't have access to the entire list of non-sport groups as the survey was sent to them directly from HDSA.



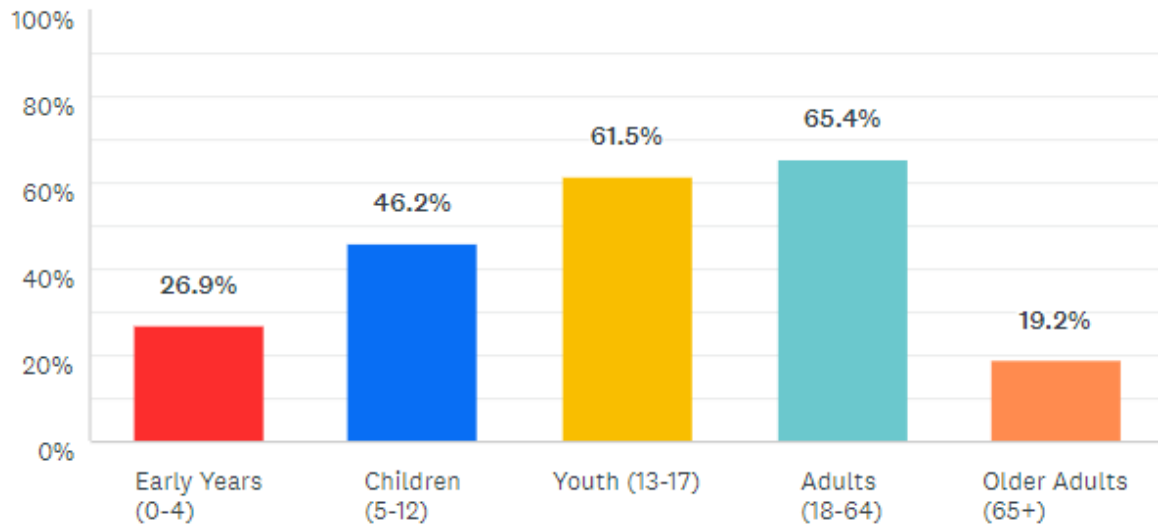
**What is your role in the organization?**



**What is the main use of the facility by your organization?**



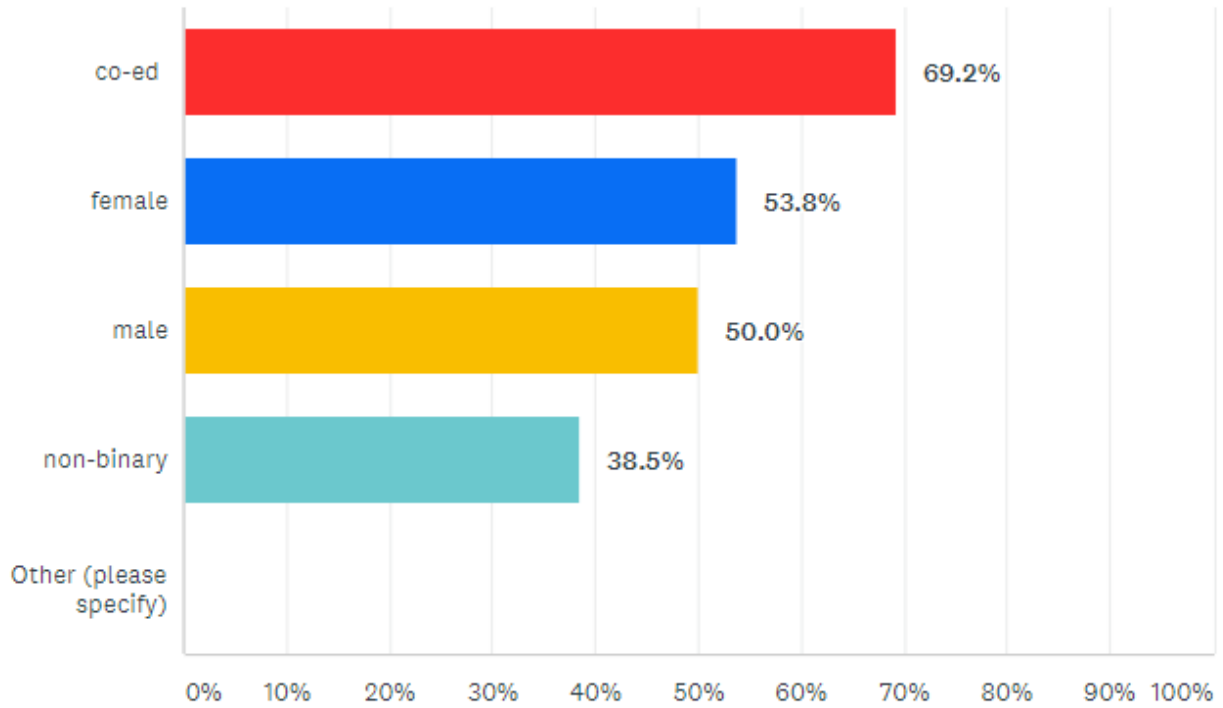
**What age groups do you serve?**



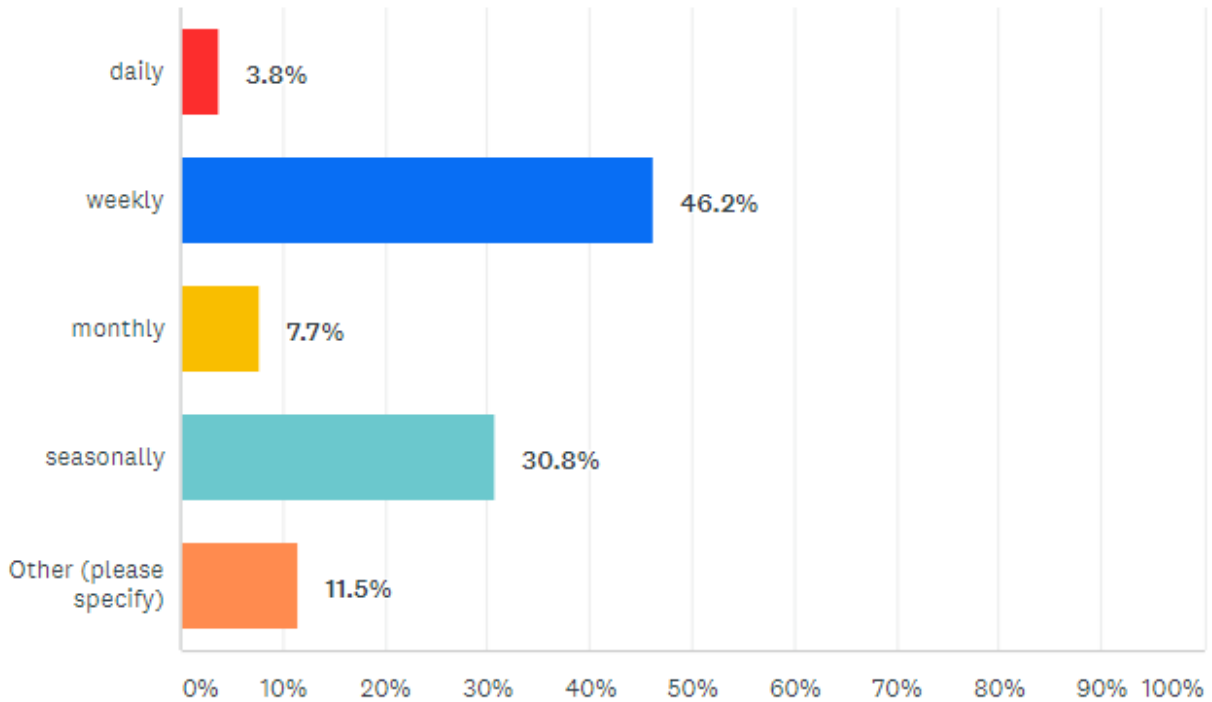
**Age groups per organization**

1 age group	13
2 age groups	3
3 age groups	4
4 age groups	4
5 age groups	2

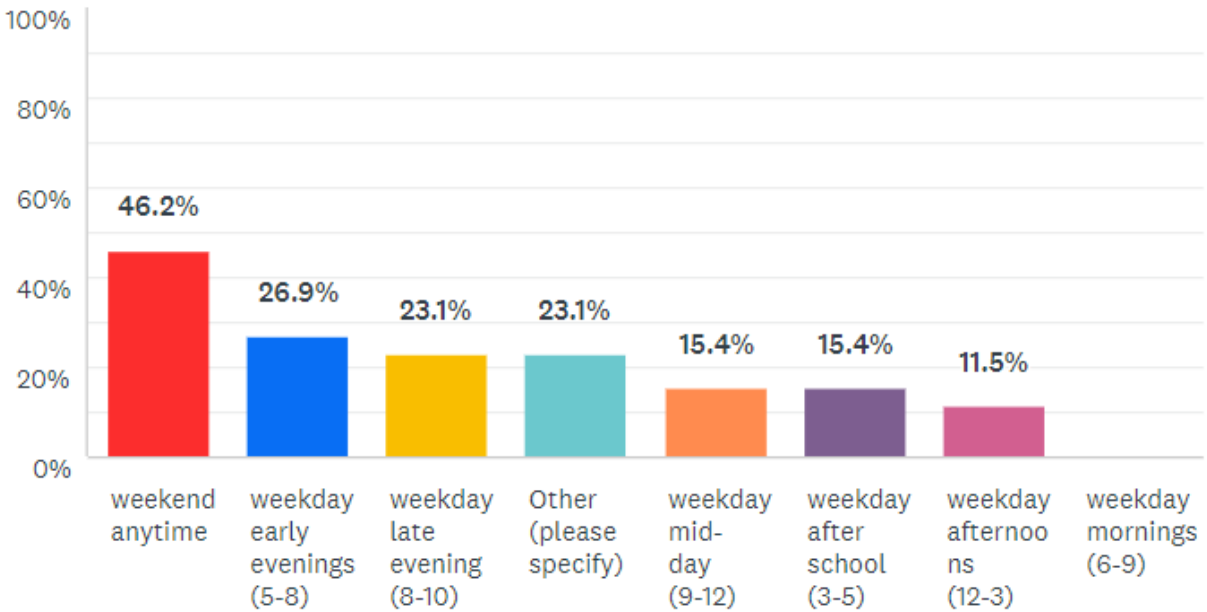
**What gender groups do you serve?**



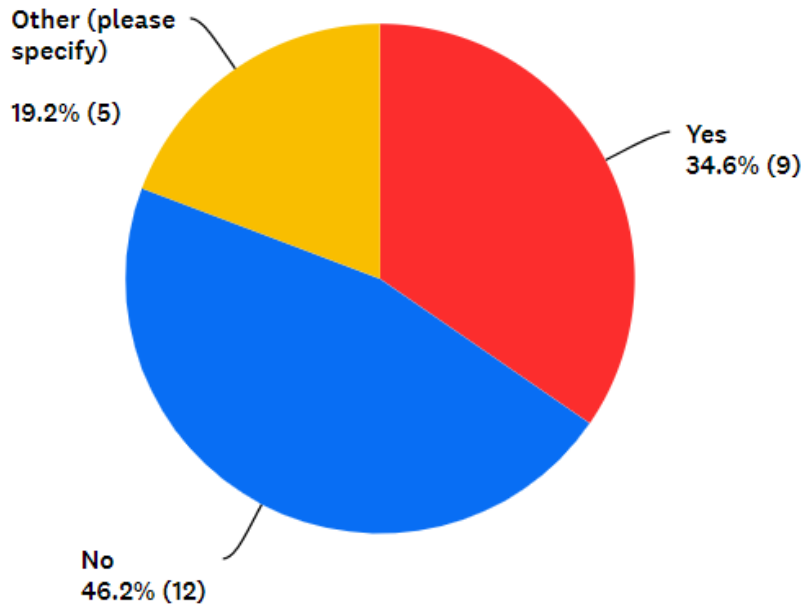
**What is the frequency of use of your group in a non-COVID year?**



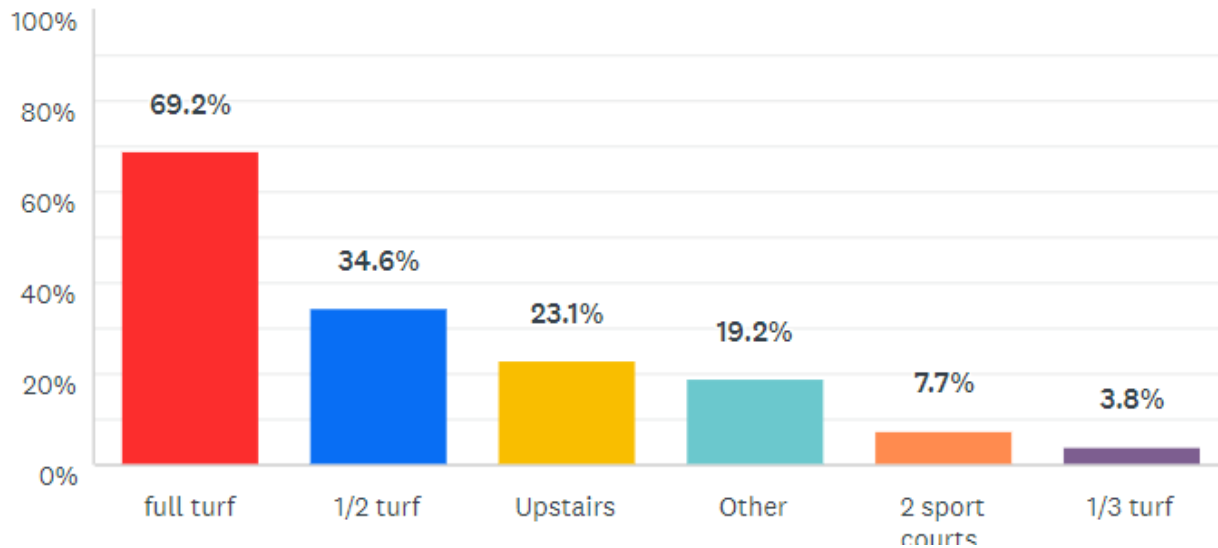
**What would best describe your preferred usage?**



**Would you like to book more facility time if it was available?**



**How much space would you need to meet your program needs?**



**How do you evaluate the current booking process? (very unsatisfied to very satisfied).**

3★  
average rating



“Good to accommodate our requests, changes.”

“Gary is such a great person to deal with.”

“Great when I hit very satisfied it lights up all.”

“Andy and Gary are very easy to deal with and very accommodating.”

“We have not problems booking our time.”

“Was paying full price for using half the floor and was not able to use the full if we wanted to as there plastic flooring laid down on other half.”

“This season we had wanted to negotiate new potential times. We were only presented with our previous booking times as an option. There seemed flexibility in bookings.”

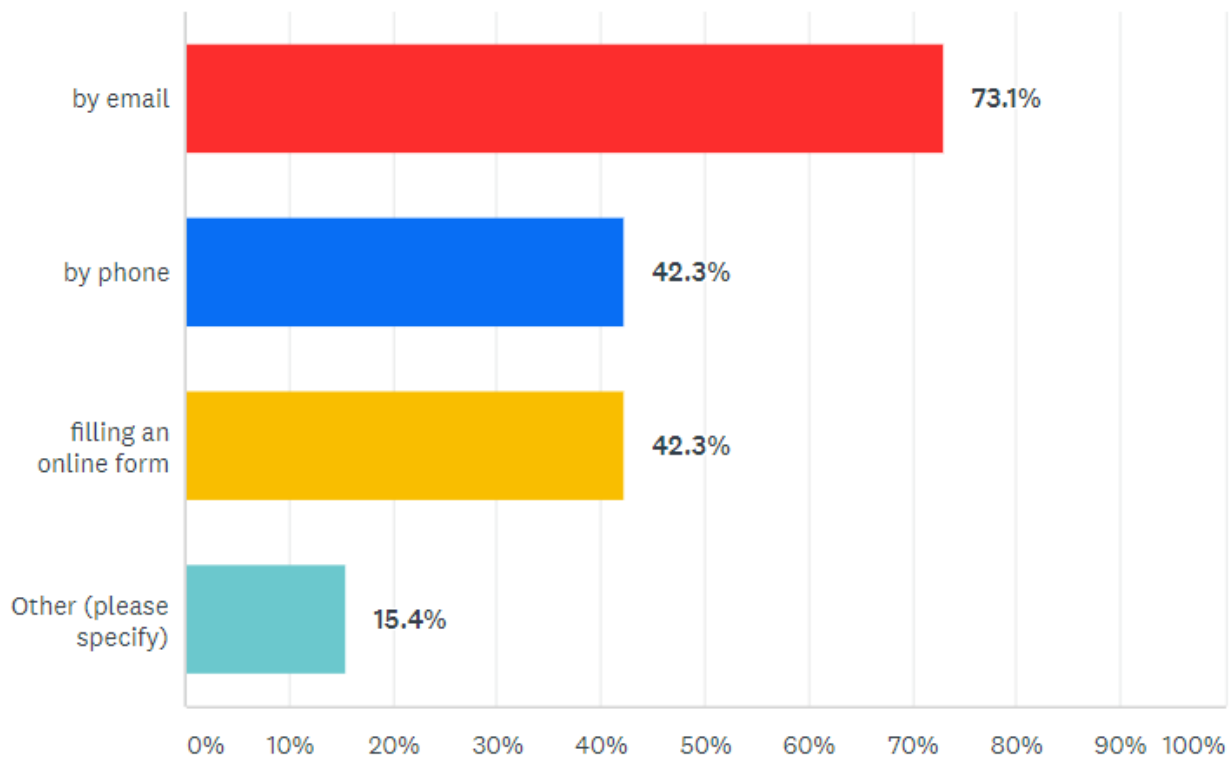
“Bingo twice a week.”

“There is not a lot of time available as it seems sums groups have majority of the time booked. However, we always have a quick response and very helpful.”

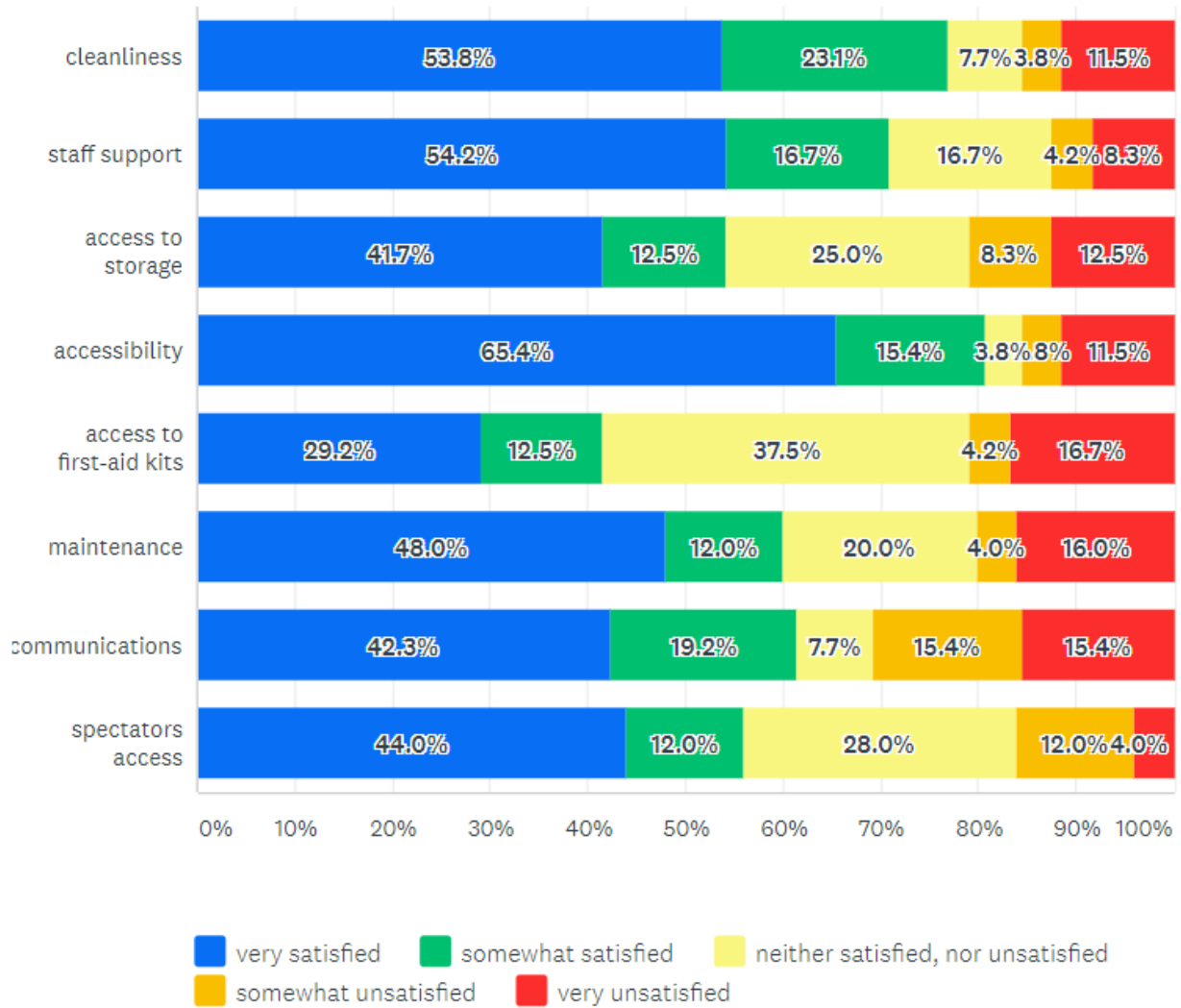
“Limited access given the down time of the facility.”

“Lack of availability and communication; decision making without consultation - we were told to move our night of practice without reason, later found out it was for bingo; lack of prioritize rec and sport over other things.”

### How would you prefer to book for space?



How do you evaluate your experience in using the facility in each of the categories below?



## **Final comments.**

“Spectator access is not really an issue during Covid.”

“We bring our own first aid kits.”

“We've had issues in the past with adequate first aid supplies. This is an area that could be improved with ready access for groups on the field or through the staff at the. In regard to maintenance we had issues in the past with equipment stored on sidelines in unsafe spaces. We've had complaints from tournament participants about cleanliness. The turf is also in poor conditions in certain sections and this has been a complaint of participants from other regions who've attended tournaments. Communications have been an issue over the years. We've been informed late in the day when there are closures of the facility for weather or maintenance issues. As previously mentioned we've also struggled to get information about details regarding or bookings and use of facility. Our questions about bookings and use are not always fully answered.”

“Excellent staff and facility. We are lucky to have this in our community.”

“Not sure where the first aid kits are and no spectators allowed due to covid.”

“Great personal service.”

“The complex staff has been very helpful and accommodating in having our programs function during covid.”

“Just more availability would be great.”

“Great to have this option in our community.”

“Garry Matheson does a great job without him it would not be there.”

“Having more options of time through the week in the evenings in future years as our numbers were growing each year. willing to work with the other groups of the court so everyone can get time. Having more courts would also be beneficial.”



“It is a wonderful facility and offers a lot to our community. We have individuals that we take and they are in wheelchairs and enjoy there time at the facility.”

“Very friendly and helpful staff.”

“Loss of space hurts program.”

“It was challenging to reach the staff to initially book the space each year and to confirm if the center was open in stormy weather. We appreciated the discounted rate and the use of the space each week, families especially enjoyed having the freedom to meet up, run and play through the winter. Some equipment was provided (nets, soccer balls) and we were free to bring our own as well.”

“Do not agree with Bingo taking up such large time slots throughout the week where this is a recreational facility and not a gambling area.”

“The turf is getting worn which affects our competitive tournaments.”

“New floor takes 25% of tennis space away, and hardly serves other sports well.”

“I would like to see better, more clear communication and transparency of the operation and financials; also since soccer has supplemented the operational costs in the past it should be a priority sport in the facility.”

“Those of us who play soccer in the facility are not pleased about the downsize in field space. We have had nothing but a negative response from our members as well as a drop in membership. Please reconsider options!”

“Survey does not address the current issue of user satisfaction with limited field use because of rubber floor on 1/3 of the field.”

## Appendix 5: Internal booking process

In order to keep a consistent and uniform process for all clients, some steps must be followed. This will ensure more efficiency, transparency and organization in the booking process. These procedures are intended to be used by staff in charge of **booking** and **communicating** with clients and potential clients.

### 1. Booking request:

Once a client or potential client contacts the complex to request a booking, staff must gather all necessary information using a **Facility Booking Request Form**. This form will be sent to the client by email, and a reply from the client also sent by email, as a means to formalize the communication between parts. It is important to make it clear to clients that a booking will be confirmed only after the Facility Booking Request Form is complete.

#### Facility Booking Request Form:

- Name of the person responsible for the booking;
- Organization;
- Activity intended;
- Phone number;
- Email address;
- Date(s) requested;
- Start time;
- End time;
- How many people will be attending;
- Space required;
- Additional services required;
- Proof of Insurance.

In the same email, staff will include a table with space options and rental rates, and a table with the fees associated with any additional services that are required.

Space required	Hourly fee
Full turf	\$ XXX
½ turf	\$ XXX
¼ turf	\$ XXX
1 sport court	\$ XXX
2 sport courts	\$ XXX

1 squash court	\$ XXX
2 squash courts	\$ XXX
Upstairs area	\$ XXX

Additional Services	Fee
Equipment setup	\$ XXX
Equipment storage	\$ XXX
Audio/video equipment	\$ XXX
Tables/chairs	\$ XXX
Custodial services	\$ XXX
Other services?	\$ XXX

## 2. Booking proposal:

Once the client replies back with the required information, staff will send a booking proposal containing:

- Confirmation of availability for the desired dates/times;
- Fees for all the spaces and additional services required;
- Deadline and conditions for payment - a hold of 10% in order to secure the booking and the remaining 90% at the day of the event (or last day of a multi-day booking);
- Cancellation policy: a fee of \$25 or 10% of the full rental fee (whichever is greater) will apply for cancellations made within 10 days of the scheduled booking;
- COVID-19 prevention protocols.

## 3. Booking confirmation:

The booking will be considered confirmed once the client pays the 10% hold and confirms, by email, that he agrees with the conditions previously sent. Staff must send another e-mail with the booking details and a reinforcement of the cancellation policy and any other conditions applied at the moment (i.e. COVID-protocols).

#### **4. Ongoing communications:**

Any additional communications between client and staff must be made by e-mail, to ensure transparency and keep a record of requests or changes in the booking.

#### **5. After-event feedback:**

After the day of the event, a quick survey could be sent to the client as a way of collecting feedback about the services provided.

## **Appendix 6: External Booking Process**

In order to make sure clients are exploring the full potential of the facility and resources available, these are the main steps to be followed, from the clients' point of view.

### **1. Check for availability.**

A client (or potential client) will contact the Complex at least 10 days prior to the desired booking date, either by email or by phone. In order to formalize a request for booking, the client is required to complete a **Facility Booking Request Form**. This form will be emailed to the client by Complex staff.

### **2. Booking request.**

The client will reply back by email with the completed Facility Booking Request Form.

#### **Facility Booking Request Form:**

- Name of the person responsible for the booking;
- Organization;
- Activity intended;
- Phone number;
- Email address;
- Date(s) requested;
- Start time;
- End time;
- How many people will be attending;
- Space required;
- Additional services required;
- Proof of Insurance.

In the same email, clients will receive a table with space options and rental rates, and a table with the fees associated with any additional services that are required.

### **3. Booking proposal:**

Once the client replies back with the required information, staff will send a booking proposal containing:

- Confirmation of availability for the desired dates/times;
- Fees for all the spaces and additional services required;
- Deadline and conditions for payment - a hold of 10% in order to secure the booking and the remaining 90% at the day of the event (or last day of a multi-day booking);
- Cancellation policy: a fee of \$25 or 10% of the full rental fee (whichever is greater) will apply for cancellations made within 10 days of the scheduled booking;
- COVID-19 prevention protocols.

The client must agree with all the conditions in the proposal and pay the 10% hold in order to confirm the booking request.

### **4. Booking confirmation:**

The booking will be considered confirmed once the client pays the 10% hold and confirms, by email, that they agree with all conditions from the booking proposal. Staff will then send a confirmation email with the booking details, a reinforcement of the cancellation policy and any other conditions applied at the time of booking (i.e. COVID-protocols).

### **5. Ongoing communications:**

Any additional communication between client and staff must take place over email, to ensure transparency and for recordkeeping of any requests or changes to the booking.

### **6. After-event feedback:**

After the event, the client will receive a follow up email from staff with a request to answer a short survey. By answering the survey, the client will help improve the quality of the services provided.