



POLICY NO.: 2016- 01

SOURCE: Access to Affordable Recreation

SECTION: Recreation and Community Services

DATE ENACTED: June 1, 2016

DATE OF REVIEW: May 1, 2017

1. POLICY:

The Town of Penetanguishene recognizes and promotes the full participation of all residents in recreational programs and services regardless of financial circumstances. Recreation Programs will be planned, delivered and evaluated to ensure they are affordable, inclusive and responsive to need.

2. OBJECTIVE:

- 2.1 Provide guidelines for the development of affordable recreation for residents.
- 2.2 Establish a standardized procedure for administering municipal subsidy for recreational programs where a participant is not able to afford the program fee.
- 2.3 Recommend partnerships with a community agency to review requests and provide referrals based on their established processes for approvals when providing subsidies for individuals or families.
- 2.4 Document inquiries/submissions and responses for residents requiring municipal subsidy for recreation programming to effectively track the programs usage.

3. SCOPE:

- 3.1 This policy extends to residents of Penetanguishene and covers recreation programs and day camp directly delivered by the Recreation & Community Services Department.
- 3.2 This policy excludes private and contracted programs provided by individuals and/or organizations in Town facilities. It also excludes programs delivered on behalf of or in partnership with Town.

4. DEFINITIONS:

- 4.1 Recreation Program - Activities of a recreation, sport, art or cultural nature that may be self-directed or instructional, providing skill development in a particular leisure pursuit. Programs may be introductory or specialty and are of an on-going nature.

- 4.2 Financial Assistance - Refers to an approved waiving of program fees charged by the Recreation & Community Services Department for participation in a recreation program or day camp.
- 4.3 Program Fees – the cost of participating in a town run recreation program or day camp.

5. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES:

*Staff will evaluate the development of recreation programs and day camp using the following criteria:

- historical use
- customer feedback
- any awareness to identified populations' (low income, children, youth, seniors, inactive) needs
- strategic priorities
- affordability and market trends

5.1 A range of recreation programs and day camp will be provided to the community directly by the Recreation & Community Services Department. Section 5.2 sets out the categories of programs and day camp in the municipal recreation department.

5.2 Recreation programs and services are categorized as follows:

5.2.1 Introductory/beginner programs

5.2.2 Specialty programs (fitness, themed, etc.)

5.2.3 Day Camp, Kinder Kamp, Adventure Camp, or Specialty Camp

5.3 Programs available that financial assistance can be applied for to participate include recreational programs or day camp programs.

6. PROGRAM FEES:

6.1 Recreation programs and day camps will be priced according to a market rate. Program fees are intended to recover the direct operating costs of a program or camp. Program fees may however be established below the cost recovery threshold where the program is deemed to provide significant community benefit.

7. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE:

7.1 The availability of financial assistance will be communicated to residents via the Town Website, School Newsletters, Recreation and Leisure Guide and social media.

- 7.2 The process of obtaining financial assistance will be non-intrusive, eliminate stigma and respect a person's dignity and confidentiality. The Recreation and Community Services Department will work with the community to share the program with organizations and potential candidates. Program eligibility to be confirmed by community organizations such as We Are the Villagers, Canadian Tire Jumpstart, or other similar organizations. A referral letter from one of these organizations is required to be eligible for financial assistance under the Town's Access to Affordable Recreation Program.
- 7.3 If a program requested is full or cancelled due to low registration the Town will work to offer an alternate program when available or alternate day camp week that has space available.
- 7.4 Funds may not be available if requests exceed allocated amount. Requests will be assessed as funds are available. Total requests and usage will be tracked to update Council during annual budget deliberation.
- 7.5 Town of Penetanguishene residents will be able to apply one subsidy per child for each season for recreation programs (max 4 subsidies annually) and one subsidy per month/per child for weekly day camp registration. The day camp allocation can be available for Winter, March and Summer camps offered by the Town of Penetanguishene.

8. MONITORING AND EVALUATION:

- 8.1 The Recreation & Community Services Department will undertake an evaluation of the Affordable Access to Recreation Policy within one year after it is fully implemented to assess its effectiveness and to identify amendments if required.
- 8.2 Any proposed substantive amendments will be submitted to Council for consideration and approval.
- 8.3 The Town will regularly monitor the effectiveness of the Policy.