

Corporate Policy and Procedure



Policy No. 08-01-01
Page 1 of 16
Effective Date 2005 04 30
Supersedes 1997 05 28

TAB: COMMUNITY SERVICES
SECTION: COMMUNITY GROUPS
SUBJECT: VOLUNTEER GROUP LIAISON PROGRAM

POLICY STATEMENT

The City of Mississauga supports volunteer community groups providing services which benefit the residents of Mississauga, through the Volunteer Group Liaison Program.

PURPOSE

The Volunteer Group Liaison Program is designed to recognize and foster citizen involvement in the community by providing various levels of assistance. The levels of assistance which can be provided are limited by resources available; therefore, groups are encouraged to work toward reducing their reliance on City resources.

Direct financial assistance is not provided as part of the Volunteer Group Liaison Program, but may be available through the Corporate Grant Program.

The purposes of this policy are to identify the types of groups which are eligible for assistance, the levels of assistance that may be provided, and the application and approval process.

POLICY STRUCTURE

The policy is divided into three sections:

- Scope - this section begins on page 2 and applies to all groups interested in assistance under this policy.
- Affiliated Group Status - this section begins on page 4 and is specific to groups interested in applying for affiliated status.
- Volunteer Group Register - this section begins on page 15 and is specific to groups who wish to be included on the volunteer group register.

SCOPE

Categories of Groups

Eligible groups may receive assistance as an "affiliated" group, or through inclusion on the City's volunteer group register. Affiliated status is reserved for groups that provide services which supplement the services provided by the City, and provides a wide range of assistance to the group. Inclusion on the City's

Corporate Policy and Procedure



Policy No. 08-01-01
Page 2 of 16
Effective Date 2005 04 30
Supersedes 1997 05 28

volunteer group register does not require that the services provided by the group supplement the services provided by the City, and provides more limited benefits to the group.

Eligible Groups

Non-profit, Mississauga-based volunteer community groups which provide services to Mississauga residents are eligible for this program, provided:

- the group cannot be disqualified due to the nature of the group, as outlined in the following section on "Ineligible Groups"; and
- the group can meet the specific requirements outlined in this policy under the headings "Affiliated Group Status" and "Volunteer Group Register".

Ineligible Groups

Communications, Corporate Services Department maintains a mailing list of community groups which are interested in receiving information from the City which is of particular interest to the group but which are not eligible for obtaining services or renting facilities/equipment at a special rate. Groups interested in being included on this mailing list, should contact Communications for information on requirements. Such groups are not covered by this policy.

Groups whose primary interest is in promoting professional associations or business opportunities are not eligible for assistance under this program. Such groups are normally self-funding and, in so far as their purpose is, in whole or in part, to promote the business affairs and economic interests of their members, it is inappropriate for them to receive assistance from the City. Economic Development, City Manager's Office can provide information on business opportunities in Mississauga.

Groups whose primary purposes, goals and objectives are in opposition to, or in conflict with, the goals and objectives of the City of Mississauga as disclosed and demonstrated by its decisions, actions, plans, by-laws, policies, programs, or otherwise, are not eligible for assistance under this program.

Political parties and other groups with the aim of furthering the aims of a political party, promoting a political doctrine, persuading the public to adopt a particular view on a broad social

Corporate Policy and Procedure



Policy No. 08-01-01
Page 3 of 16
Effective Date 2005 04 30
Supersedes 1997 05 28

question, or attempting to bring about or oppose changes in the law or City policy are not eligible under this program.

Groups whose main purpose is to further the aims of a religious organization or to promote a religious doctrine are not eligible for affiliation. However, such groups may be included on the City's volunteer group register.

National, provincial, or regional groups cannot be affiliated. However, groups affiliated with national, provincial, or regional groups may be included on the volunteer group register.

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 will not act as a review body for any such group, except to the extent that the actions of a group disqualify the group from eligibility under this program and, then, only to advise the group that unless the decision or action is corrected, the group will forfeit its status in this regard.

Privacy

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.

AFFILIATED GROUP STATUS

Eligibility

To qualify for "affiliated group" status, the group must be an "Eligible Group" as outlined in the "Scope" section of this policy. In addition to these requirements, specific eligibility requirements of affiliated groups are:

- The group must demonstrate by the information provided with the application that it exists for the sole benefit of Mississauga and that the services provided are available to all residents of Mississauga.
- The services provided must supplement the services provided by the municipality.

Corporate Policy and Procedure



Policy No.	08-01-01
Page	4 of 16
Effective Date	2005 04 30
Supersedes	1997 05 28

-
- The group should not duplicate the services of other community groups, unless it can be shown that an existing affiliated group cannot meet community needs, and that additional services are required and facilities are available. Therefore, groups whose services, membership and geographic service area are the same as those of an existing affiliated group or a group whose application is pending, will not be eligible for affiliated group status.
 - Groups providing youth services are given priority over groups providing services for adults only.
 - The group must adhere to the Ontario Human Rights Code, and make membership available to all Mississauga residents or ratepayers on a first-come, first-served basis, without restriction. Membership restrictions based on geographic location, skill level, facility limitations or age may be permitted; however, the group may not close its membership if non-residents make up any portion of the membership.
 - The group must show that it is capable of carrying out its objectives and meeting its financial obligations.
 - The group must have a constitution and/or operating guidelines establishing a democratic framework within which the group will operate, including the manner in which it will dispose of any assets in its possession at the time of its dissolution, in accordance with the goals and objectives of the group.
 - The group's constitution and/or operating guidelines must reflect the following:
 - The group must consist of an elected board of directors or executive (not less than five members) and general membership (not less than 20 members).
 - Membership is defined and determined through a set process and the group must be able to identify its specific member categories (i.e. family memberships, voting/non-voting memberships, honorary memberships, life memberships, etc.)

Corporate Policy and Procedure



Policy No. 08-01-01
Page 5 of 16
Effective Date 2005 04 30
Supersedes 1997 05 28

- All members must be eligible to vote. In the case of children's or youth programs, adults representing those under the age of 18 years must be eligible to vote.
- The group must hold an annual general meeting, at which the board of directors is elected from the general membership through a democratic election process.

Residency Rules

For the purposes of this section, a "Mississauga resident" is:

- 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); or
- 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.

At least 80 per cent of the group's members must be Mississauga residents, as defined above, with the following exceptions:

- 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 two per cent non-residents to comply with regional and provincial governing body registration requirements.
- A group providing a service which does not otherwise exist within the City of Mississauga may be eligible if at least 51 per cent of the members are Mississauga residents, and if the group cannot function without its non-resident members. Such groups are required to 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, before approval will be granted.

Exceptions to Residency Rule

The City will consider requests from sports groups for exceptions to its residency rule. Such requests:

- must be made, in writing, prior to accepting registrations from non-residents;
- must clarify why non-residents are required;
- must provide a plan for decreasing the number of non-residents;

Corporate Policy and Procedure



Policy No. 08-01-01
Page 6 of 16
Effective Date 2005 04 30
Supersedes 1997 05 28

- must state that non-resident members will not receive a greater opportunity to participate than resident members;
- must state that no team will be expanded to an unreasonable size/number of participants as a result of acceptance of non-resident members;
- must state that the group's executive is in support of the exception; and
- must be signed by a member of the group's executive.

Requests for exceptions which do not meet the criteria listed above will be referred back to the group's executive.

Requests are to be submitted to the group's staff liaison. The staff liaison will evaluate the request and make a recommendation to the Commissioner of Community Services. The Commissioner may approve the exception:

- when there are insufficient Mississauga residents to form a local team or league, and the use of non-residents will enable residents to participate in the sport; or
- for compassionate reasons; or
- when the group caters to "individual" sport, and the participation of non-residents does not create increased demand for City facilities which displaces Mississauga residents; and
- when approval of the exception will not significantly alter the intent of this (Volunteer Group Liaison Program) policy.

If approval of an exception will affect similar affiliated minor sport groups, the affected groups will be consulted with a view to obtaining consensus on exceptions, to ensure that equity is maintained between similar groups.

Approval is granted for one year only - the request for an exception must be re-submitted on an annual basis, prior to registration. Upon approval of the request for an exception, the group may accept registrations from non-residents.

Services Provided
to Affiliated Groups

This program is designed to provide support and assist groups in delivering their services to the community. At the same time, it is the City's intent that every affiliated group will work to reduce its reliance on the City. The types and levels of services provided

Corporate Policy and Procedure



Policy No. 08-01-01
Page 7 of 16
Effective Date 2005 04 30
Supersedes 1997 05 28

are dependent on the resources available when the application is being considered, the necessity of the group's programs to the community, and the needs of the group. The staff liaison works with the group's representatives to determine appropriate types and levels of service. Approval of services does not guarantee that the same services will be provided in subsequent years.

The following list of services represents the maximum services available to an affiliated group:

- staff liaison to assist in an advisory capacity;
- information on activities and opportunities available through the City, through inclusion on a distribution list;
- publicity assistance through inclusion in City brochures and the City's web site;
- priority booking of parks and community centre rooms, if available, up to 12 months in advance and special rental rates, if applicable;
- on a space-available basis and in accordance with the City's facility booking practices, provision of space for a maximum of eight monthly executive/board meetings and one annual general meeting per year at no charge. (Refer to Corporate Policy and Procedure - Booking Facilities at the Civic Centre Complex for information on Civic Centre facilities);
- priority booking of City outdoor sports facilities (affiliated minor sports groups are given first priority, affiliated adult sports groups are given second priority);
- priority booking of City ice and arena floors, in accordance with Corporate Policy and Procedure - Prime Time Ice Allocation;
- use and delivery of equipment, subject to availability and payment of fees, if applicable;

Corporate Policy and Procedure



Policy No. 08-01-01
Page 8 of 16
Effective Date 2005 04 30
Supersedes 1997 05 28

- permission to place portable signs on City road allowances (refer to Corporate Policy and Procedure - Portable Signs on Road Allowances);
- third party liability insurance coverage for the group's officers, directors and board members, volunteers and staff while acting in the scope of their duties (participants are not covered) based on approval of the City's appointed insurance broker;
- resource assistance for fund raising;
- contact with other groups and agencies in Mississauga, and referral to appropriate liaison within federal and provincial bodies;
- assistance to groups in time of crisis to maintain their service;
- assistance in the start-up of new groups; and
- assistance in safe-guarding or disposing of the group's assets, if the group disbands.

Application for Affiliated Status

Groups should contact Recreation and Parks, Community Services Department for applications and to verify eligibility. If another department or division has specific expertise in the area of interest to the group, and can provide a more effective staff liaison, the request will be forwarded to that department or division.

All information requested on the application, including signatures, must be provided. Applications are renewed concurrent with their expiry date.

A staff liaison will be assigned by the division head to review the application, answer questions related to the application, and to assist in determining the level of assistance the group may request.

Corporate Policy and Procedure



Policy No. 08-01-01
Page 9 of 16
Effective Date 2005 04 30
Supersedes 1997 05 28

Applications are assessed in accordance with the criteria established by this policy. The staff liaison reviews the needs of each group, its goals and objectives, and the activities and services it provides, to determine an appropriate level of assistance. The City's cost of providing services will be a factor in assessing the services provided to each group. Limits on City resources may restrict the level of service provided.

Information Required with Application for Affiliation

All applicants for affiliated status must provide the following information with the application:

- a statement of the group's purposes, goals and objectives; and
- a schedule of the events, programs and services that the group intends to provide during the first year of its affiliation;
- a copy of the group's constitution and by-laws, and minutes of the annual general meeting documenting any amendments, or a copy of the group's operating guidelines if a constitution does not exist (refer to Affiliated Group Eligibility section for more information on constitution); and
- a verification of membership form, signed by two authorized officers, confirming that the group meets membership and residency requirements (the City has the right to review the membership list to confirm residency requirements); and
- the names, addresses and telephone numbers of the group's board of directors and contact persons, including a contact person for the general public; and
- a complete financial statement of the previous operating year's expenditures and revenues, and a budget for the next operating year, signed by two authorized officers (the City reserves the right to request that financial statements be prepared by a professional accountant (all new applicant groups and, effective January 1, 2006, all groups seeking renewal of their status must submit an audited financial statement if their expenditures exceed \$100,000); and

Corporate Policy and Procedure



Policy No. 08-01-01
Page 10 of 16
Effective Date 2005 04 30
Supersedes 1997 05 28

- a complete statement of assets and liabilities; and
- a list of the services being requested from the City. (If insurance coverage is being requested, the group must also complete an insurance questionnaire and submit it with the application.)

Approval of Affiliated Status

Applications for affiliated status may be approved by the Director of Recreation and Parks. (If another division is responsible for liaising with the group, the Director of Recreation and Parks will consult with that division prior to approving the application.)

Approvals for affiliations with groups whose sole purpose is to operate festivals or special events are granted for one year only. All other approvals for affiliation are granted for a maximum of two years, from the date of approval. Affiliated groups must re-apply to renew their status - approval is not guaranteed in subsequent years.

As a condition of approval, all outstanding debts to the City must be paid in full or agreement reached regarding retirement of the debt.

Lists of all affiliated groups are provided to Council members, upon request.

Role of Staff Liaison for Approve Groups

Once a group has been approved for affiliation, the staff liaison's role is to assist the group by providing advice and guidance on civic matters, and to provide those services which were approved by the City in response to a request from the group made through the application process. 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 interest, the staff liaison may sit on the group's board of directors only if approved by the employee's department head, and only in a non-voting capacity.

Corporate Policy and Procedure



Policy No. 08-01-01
Page 11 of 16
Effective Date 2005 04 30
Supersedes 1997 05 28

Affiliate Group Responsibilities

Affiliated groups are responsible for:

- continuing to work for the betterment of the community;
- providing immediate notice to the staff liaison of any changes in the group's executive/board or constitution;
- forwarding minutes of the annual general meeting, minutes relating to any changes in the group's constitution, and minutes of any other meetings to the staff liaison, for information purposes;
- maintaining up-to-date membership lists with addresses;
- providing up-to-date signed Freedom of Information sheets which include names and telephone numbers of contact persons, including a contact person for the general public and a contact person specific to booking facilities;
- working to reduce reliance on City resources;
- respecting the intent of the Corporation's rental rate structure and complying with the booking and cancellation requirements of facility booking policies (refer to Corporate Policy and Procedure - Payment of Facility Rental Fees);
- operating on democratic principles and processes which are accountable to members and which can withstand public scrutiny;
- participating in City-sponsored events when the opportunity is available;
- submitting an application to renew affiliation, before the end of the term;
- acting as a disciplinary body for participants and/or groups under the group's jurisdiction; and
- co-operating with similar groups to minimize duplication.

Corporate Policy and Procedure



Policy No. 08-01-01
Page 12 of 16
Effective Date 2005 04 30
Supersedes 1997 05 28

Termination of Affiliated Status

Status may be rescinded by the Director of Recreation and Parks and future requests for assistance may be denied, if the group:

- fails to operate in a financially responsible manner; or
- revokes its constitution, by-laws, or operating guidelines; or
- acts in contravention of its constitution, by-laws, or operating guidelines; or
- acts in contravention of this policy; or
- abuses the services and privileges provided; or
- violates any provincial or federal legislation or municipal by-law with respect to the activities of the group; or
- fails to abide by a ruling from the Ontario Human Rights Commission regarding the group's actions.

Groups may terminate affiliated status at any time. Requests to terminate affiliation must be made in writing to the staff liaison, and must be signed by the group's executive members.

VOLUNTEER GROUP REGISTER Eligibility

To qualify for inclusion on the City's volunteer group register, the group must be an "Eligible Group" as outlined in the "Scope" section of this policy. In addition to these requirements, specific eligibility requirements for inclusion on the volunteer group register are:

- The group must demonstrate by the information provided with the application that it exists to provide a service primarily to Mississauga residents, and that it is working for the betterment of the community. Unlike affiliated groups, the services offered need not supplement the services provided by the municipality.
- Membership must be open to all Mississauga residents unless the group exists to represent the citizens of a specific geographic area (i.e. ratepayer groups). In such cases, membership must be open to all residents within the geographic area.
- The group must consist of a board of directors having not less than five members and general membership (membership may be through paid fees or, for ratepayer groups, may include all residents in the area represented).

Corporate Policy and Procedure



Policy No. 08-01-01
Page 13 of 16
Effective Date 2005 04 30
Supersedes 1997 05 28

- The group must hold a regular meeting, at which the board of directors is elected from the general membership.
- The group must adhere to the Ontario Human Rights Code.
- The group must have a constitution and/or operating guidelines establishing a democratic framework within which the group will operate, including the manner in which it will dispose of any assets in its possession at the time of its dissolution, in accordance with the goals and objectives of the group. (For groups renewing their inclusion on the volunteer group register, this provision comes into effect on January 1, 2006)
- The group's constitution and/or operating guidelines must reflect the following:
 - The group must consist of an elected board of directors or executive (not less than five members) and general membership (not less than 20 members).
 - Membership is defined and determined through a set process.
 - Membership may be through paid fees or, for ratepayer groups, may include all residents in the area represented.
 - All members must be eligible to vote. In the case of children's or youth programs, adults representing those under the age of 18 years must be eligible to vote.
 - The group must hold an annual general meeting, at which the board of directors is elected from the general membership through a democratic election process.

(For groups renewing their inclusion on the volunteer group register, this provision comes into effect on January 1, 2006)

The City's volunteer group register is made available, upon request, to all members of Council and City staff.

Corporate Policy and Procedure



Policy No. 08-01-01
Page 14 of 16
Effective Date 2005 04 30
Supersedes 1997 05 28

Benefits of Inclusion on Register

Inclusion on the City's volunteer group register does not convey endorsement of the group by the City of Mississauga, nor should the views of the group be seen to reflect the views of individual elected officials. The following list represents the potential benefits of being included on the register:

- access to information on activities and opportunities available through the City, through inclusion on a mailing list;
- permission to book City facilities at the "community" rental rate, if applicable and available;
- ratepayer groups only, on a space-available basis and in accordance with the City's facility booking policies, provision of community centre meeting room space for a maximum of eight executive meetings and one annual general meeting per year at no charge; and
- permission to use, and delivery of, City equipment (subject to availability and payment of fees, if applicable); and
- permission to place portable signs on City road allowances (refer to Corporate Policy and Procedure - Portable Signs on Road Allowances).

Application for Inclusion on Register

Ratepayer groups applying for inclusion on the register should contact Communications, Corporate Services Department. All other groups should contact Program Development, Recreation and Parks, Community Services Department.

All applicants must provide, with the application:

- a copy of the group's constitution and by-laws or operating guidelines or incorporation papers which include the purpose, goals and objectives of the group;
- the names and addresses of the group's board of directors, and the positions they hold; and
- a list of the group's activities and services.

Corporate Policy and Procedure



Policy No. 08-01-01
Page 15 of 16
Effective Date 2005 04 30
Supersedes 1997 05 28

Approval of Inclusion On Register

Ratepayer group applications may be approved by the Communications staff project manager. All other applications may be approved by the Manager, Program Development, Recreation and Parks. Approval is granted for a maximum of two years from the date of approval. Groups must re-apply to renew inclusion on the register - approval is not guaranteed in subsequent years. As a condition of approval, all outstanding debts to the City must be paid in full or agreement reached regarding retirement of the debt.

Responsibilities of Groups Included on Register

Groups included on the register are responsible for:

- continuing to work for the betterment of the community;
- operating on democratic principles and processes which are accountable to members and which can withstand public scrutiny;
- co-operating with similar groups to minimize duplication;
- providing immediate notice to the staff liaison of any changes in the group's executive or constitution;
- providing up-to-date lists of names and telephone numbers of contact persons, including a contact for the general public and a contact specific to facility bookings;
- submitting an application to renew the registration, before the end of the term; and
- respecting the intent of the Corporation's rental rate structure and complying with the booking and cancellation requirements of facility booking policies (refer to Corporate Policy and Procedure - Payment of Facility Rental Fees).

Removal from Register

Groups may be removed from the register by the Communications project manager or the Manager, Program Development and future requests for registration may be denied, if the group:

- revokes its constitution, by-laws or operating guidelines; or
- acts in contravention of its constitution, by-laws, or operating guidelines; or
- acts in contravention of this policy; or
- abuses the services and privileges provided; or
- violates any provincial or federal legislation or municipal by-law with respect to the activities of the group; or
- has a ruling against it from the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

Corporate Policy and Procedure



Policy No. 08-01-01
Page 16 of 16
Effective Date 2005 04 30
Supersedes 1997 05 28

Groups may request that they be removed from the register at any time. Requests to terminate registration must be made in writing to the Communications project manager or the designated Recreation and Parks staff person responsible for this process, and must be signed by the group's executive members.

REFERENCE:

GC-0256-2005 – 2005 04 27

CONTACT

For more information, contact the staff liaison assigned to the group, or Recreation and Parks, Community Services Department, or (for ratepayer groups only) Communications, Corporate Services Department.