



1. Philosophy of the [Governing Board] – The [Governing Board] recognizes that [Church] facilities and grounds are primarily maintained for the purpose of providing religious services to its members of the [Church]. The Community Use Program is an integral link between [Church] and [citizens of the town/city], and the communities served by the [Church].

As a result, the [Governing Board] desires to nurture the community's involvement in the church and at the same time encourage the use of churches as community centers. Moreover, by encouraging economical use of space and by obtaining revenue through assessment and collection of fees, community use of [Church] facilities and grounds is beneficial both to the [Church] and the community.

2. No unwarranted risk – Use of [Church] facilities must be consistent with all policies and procedures of the [Governing Board]. Accordingly, community use shall not pose an unwarranted risk to [Church] facilities or grounds, or to the well-being and good order of the community.
3. Identity of users – [Church] facilities shall be accessible to responsible organizations, associations, and individuals of the community for appropriate civic, culture, religious, social, recreational, governmental and general political activities. The appropriateness of activities shall be defined in terms of compliance with [Governing Board] policies and not by judgments made about the subject matter or content of such activities, except as otherwise provided by [Governing Board] policies. Permission for use of [Church] facilities shall not constitute a [Church] endorsement of an organization, the beliefs of an organization or group, the expression of any opinion regarding the nomination, retention, election or defeat of any candidate or the expression of any opinion as to the passage or defeat of any issue.
4. All approved use requests must be pursuant to written agreement entered into consistent with the [Governing Board's] policy and all applicable rules and regulations.
5. Use priority – Use requests shall be prioritized as follows:
  - i. Church programs
  - ii. Programs identified by the [Church] as having priority for other reasons, including those referenced in intergovernmental agreements between the [Church] and governmental bodies, associations, special districts, or similar entities.
6. Scheduling Procedures<sup>1</sup> – all community requests, including requests to hold fund raising activities, shall be referred to \_\_\_\_\_ for contract execution and scheduling.

Facility usage shall be scheduled by \_\_\_\_\_ through a master scheduling calendar available via [intra-net].

<sup>1</sup> In a larger district or church context, central scheduling through a designated department is desirable to allow for coordination and consistency. While such a formal method may not be desirable in every context, reasonably uniform, nondiscriminatory and accessible procedures are advisable.

In approving and scheduling use of [Church] facilities, the \_\_\_\_\_ shall apply the following criteria:

- Adequate insurance coverage shall be in effect for all groups during the use/
- All individuals or groups shall agree to fully defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the [Church] from and against all liability, loss, claim, demand, lien, damage, penalty, fines, interest, cost and expense incurred by the [Church] for injury or damage directly or indirectly due to the individual's or group's use of the premises.
- No use shall be allowed which poses undue risk to users, facility and/or equipment, or results in costs not reimbursable to the [Church].
- The church may select one day a week for no community use which will be referred to as a "dark day." Any last minute church activities will be scheduled for the church's dark day to minimize community use contract cancellations.
- Use shall be approved only when the group requesting such use submits a written request a minimum of seven (7) days prior to use, designating the dates and hours for requested use, nature of the use, and such other information as the [Church] administration deems appropriate.
- Use shall be approved only when the group requesting such use is open to all persons who may be reasonably or appropriately included in the group.
- Use shall be allowed only when any applicable fees associated with use are paid in full; and
- The [Church] reserves the right to move any group based on facility availability.

7. Authority to schedule – Building administrators, department heads, and facility managers shall not contract for community use activities. Instead, such individuals shall submit their events calendar to the \_\_\_\_\_ by the following dates: \_\_\_\_\_.<sup>2</sup>

8. Establishment of Fees – Fee schedules shall be established to recoup costs associated with the use of the facility and to reflect the category of the group/organization using the facility. The fee schedule shall apply equally to all users similarly situated.

i. Fees shall be set for use based upon the following categories:

1. Civic Youth Groups (e.g. Boy/Girl Scouts, 4-H Club)
2. Other Youth Organizations (e.g. YMCA)
3. Nonprofit and Adult/Mixed groups (e.g., churches, homeowners' associations, colleges, adult meetings)
4. Commercial (e.g. dance groups, semi-pro sports, private companies.)

<sup>2</sup>To implement this policy consistently, it is important that there be central authority for scheduling community use. In order to allow for effective scheduling, with minimal conflicts, it is advisable for the central authority to have church-established calendars in advance.



- ii. All community use fees shall be assessed, collected, accounted for and allocated for distribution by \_\_\_\_\_.
    - 1. Revenue generated by community use activities shall be used for \_\_\_\_\_.
    - 2. An appropriate formula shall be determined to reimburse the church for direct costs associated with community use activities.
    - 3. Remaining revenue shall fund discretionary small project capital improvements or equipment replacement to the church.
9. The [Church] Community Use Agreement shall provide that:
- i. Users are responsible for any damages or liability incurred by the [Church] as a result of such use;
  - ii. The use may be restricted or stopped at the discretion of \_\_\_\_\_ based upon appropriate policy, procedure, facility rules of use, or governing rules of the use contract.
10. Each [Responsible administrator] shall designate an individual who will be the responsible contact person for that particular facility to provide and receive information and communication regarding the Community Use Program.
11. The [Responsible administrator] is authorized to enforce this policy through any reasonable means including but not limited to:
- i. Notice to community users regarding the requirements of this policy
  - ii. Notice to [Church] administrators so as to prevent non-compliance with this policy; and
  - iii. Establishment of consequences for violation of this policy, including but not limited to:
    - 1. Discipline consistent with that applied to violations of other [Church] policies; and
    - 2. Surrender to the [Church] of any benefits obtained by the church or any individual as a result of use which violates this policy.<sup>3</sup>
  - iv. Building administrators may appeal a decision by the [Responsible Administrator] authorizing or denying requested use of a facility by submitting written notice to \_\_\_\_\_.
- The notice shall provide rationale for allowing/disallowing the requested community use activity in the building.
- 1. The appeal process shall be a meeting including the following administrators, or other staff, as required:
  - 2. The \_\_\_\_\_ shall make the final decision in regard to the use of the facility.

<sup>3</sup>Experience has shown that, particularly in large churches, individual staff members or groups of staff members have difficulty recognizing the need for the structure and formality of a Community Use Program. Enforcement and consequences provisions may mitigate the conflicts that can often result.

