

Welcome Policy

Division:	Parks and Recreation	Approved by:	City Council
Date Approved:	July 6, 1999	Source:	Parks and Recreation
Date Revised:	March 16, 2004	Category:	Finance and Accounting; Parks, Forestry and Recreation
		Sub-cat:	Cash Controls; Recreation

Policy Statement

All residents of Toronto are welcome to participate equally in recreation programs, regardless of ability to pay. To ensure equal opportunity for those residents, who are unable to finance the cost of a program, financial assistance in the form of waiving the fees is available.

The Welcome Policy has been established to remove financial barriers and increase access to recreation services in the City of Toronto.

Application Process

Applications are available at all community recreation centres and civic centres.

Applicants need to produce documentation, such as:

- Identification (e.g. Birth certificate, driver's licence or immigration papers.)
- Address confirmation (e.g. Letter from a utility company, bank letter or school report)
- Financial need confirmation (e.g. Benefit receipts, pay stubs, letter from social agency or church, income and expense statement, etc.)

People of all ages are eligible for the Welcome Policy.

Once the application has been approved, that approval extends over one full calendar year from the date of the approval.

Priority Centres

In addition, selected community centres have been designated as priority centres by City Council in July 1999. Priority Centres are located in high need communities (e.g. where more than 38% of families in the surrounding census tract are below the Low Income Cut-off (i.e. LICO) for large urban areas). All programs offered at these centres are free.

East District:

- Bliss Carmen Sr. P.S.
- Galloway Road P. S.
- Warden Avenue Jr. P. S.

- Warden Woods C.C.
- Oakridge C.C.

South District:

- Secord C.C.
- Harrison Baths
- John Innes C.R.C.
- Scadding Court C.R.C.
- Jimmie Simpson R.C.
- Masaryk-Cowan C.R.C.
- Regent Park C.C.
- Regent Park R.C.
- Rose Avenue C.R.C.

West District:

- Chalkfarm C.C.
- Elmbank C.C.
- Kingsview Village C.S.
- North Kipling C.C.
- Rockcliffe Middle School
- Falstaff C.R.C.

North District:

- Driftwood C.R.C.
- Flemingdon R.C.
- Lawrence Heights C.R.C.
- Oakdale C.C.
- O'Connor C.R.C.

Program Eligibility

Welcome Policy applicants are eligible for the following in **each calendar year**.

Preschool (age 0 – 5) and Children (age 6 – 12):

- 1 aquatic program (if not used, no substitutions), plus
- 1 non-aquatic program (e.g. skating, music, sports, tennis, etc.) *(Note: For **Winter, Spring and Fall**, if not used, no substitutions. For **Summer**, may be substituted for a maximum of 2 weeks of camp), plus*
- 1 camp session *(Note: For **Winter, Spring and Fall**, when offered such as "Holiday Camp" in Fall or "March Break Camp" in Winter, etc. If not used, no substitutions. For **Summer**, either 2 one-week camp programs or 1 two-week camp program. If not used, no substitutions.)*

Youth (age 13 – 24):

- 1 aquatic program or 3-month aquatic pass or 10-visit aquatic punch card or 1-year aquatic pass* (if not used, no substitutions), plus
- 1 non-aquatic program or 3-month pass (e.g. fitness) or 10-visit punch card or 1-year pass* *(Note: For **Winter, Spring and Fall**, if not used, no substitutions. For **Summer**, may be substituted for a maximum of 2*

weeks of camp), plus

- 1 camp session – (Note: For **Winter, Spring and Fall**, when offered such as "Holiday Camp" in Fall or "March Break Camp" in Winter, etc.. If not used, no substitutions. For **Summer**, either 2 one-week camp programs or 1 two-week camp program. If not used, no substitutions.)

*** Note: Taking the 1-year pass (e.g. aquatic, fitness, combo) means using all 4 seasons of Welcome Policy program eligibility.**

Adults (age 25 – 59) and Older Adults (age 60+):

- 1 program or 3-month pass (e.g. aquatic, fitness, etc.) or 10-visit punch card or
- 1-year pass/membership*

*** Note: Taking the 1-year pass/membership means using all 4 seasons of Welcome Policy program eligibility.**

Household Income Eligibility

The chart below is to be used as a guideline in determining a family's financial eligibility for the Welcome Policy. The "size of family unit" income levels in this chart are based on Statistics Canada 2003 Low Income Cut-offs (LICO) for urban areas with populations over 500,000. (Note: These income levels are **before tax**.)

Family Unit Size	Household Income (BEFORE TAX)
1 person	\$19,795
2 persons	\$24,745
3 persons	\$30,774
4 persons	\$37,253
5 persons	\$41,642
6 persons	\$46,031
7 or more	\$50,421

The Welcome Policy is intended to help those with minimal discretionary income. Full-time recreation staff and Supervisors have the discretion and flexibility to extend the Welcome Policy to people in this situation. The recommended protocol is for a full-time recreation staff or a Supervisor to meet with the applicant to discuss the situation.

Please refer to the Welcome Policy Staff Guide, September, 2001 for further information.

Staff Responsibilities for Processing Applications

All staff must maintain applicant confidentiality at all times.

Role of Reception Staff or Customer Service Staff:

- *Discuss* application with applicant (in private)
- *Confirm* that all application information is accurate and complete.
- *Verify* supporting documents

- *Attach* (with applicant's consent) a copy of financial proof to white portion of application
- *Tear-off* yellow portion of application and give to applicant.
- *Forward* white portion of application, with financial proof, to full time recreation staff/Supervisor/Operation Support Officer
- *Input* program registration information into CLASS system, only if registering for a program.
- *Input* WP Membership Status into CLASS as Pending, only if registering for a program. Effective September 4, 2004 Pending Membership status will no longer be available.
- *Input* WP details in Alert Text (e.g. "WP – Approved Summer S 2002 by J. Doe 2-1234 issued 3 month Fitness Pass May 1/02) as directed in the document "Welcome Policy Quick Reference Version 4.0.ppt".

Role of Full-time Recreation Staff:

If dealing directly with applicant:

- *Discuss* application with applicant (in private)
- *Confirm* that all application information is accurate and complete
- *Verify* supporting documents
- **Approve** or **Deny** the application.
- *Attach* (with applicant's consent) a copy of financial proof to white portion of application, if applicant is approved.
- *Tear-off* yellow portion of application and give to applicant.
- *Forward* completed application to Operation Support Officer immediately.

If already in receipt of completed and forwarded application form:

- *Review*, with the client either over the phone or in person, the forwarded and completed application form.
- *Ensure* applicant already received the yellow portion of form.
- **Approve** or **Deny** the application.
- If approved, remove pending status (if applicable) (Effective September 4, 2004, Pending Membership status will no longer be available.)
- *Forward* completed application to Operation Support Officer immediately.

In either case above:

- *Input* WP Membership Status into CLASS as **Approved** or **Not Approved**. (Note: Only during peak registration periods, enter Pending into CLASS). (Effective September 4, 2004, Pending Membership status will no longer be available.)
- *Track* on a weekly basis all passes, memberships, punch cards, etc. used by Welcome Policy that are not in CLASS. Tracking should include the number of users as well as lost revenue. (Note: See Page 17, "Community Centre Sample Tracking Sheet" in "Welcome Policy Staff Guide – September 2001.")

Role of Supervisors of Recreation & Facilities:

- *Ensure* that full-time Recreation staff understand their role in facilitating the Welcome Policy.
- *Ensure* that full-time Recreation staff process the Welcome Policy applications in a timely manner.

- *Encourage* full-time Recreation staff to do Welcome Policy outreach and promotion to local agencies and residents regarding the benefits of recreation. (Note: Request a copy of the "Haldane Report" from your Operations Support Coordinator.
- *Ensure* that staff track on a weekly basis all passes, memberships, punch cards, etc. used by Welcome Policy that are not in CLASS. Tracking should include the number of users as well as lost revenue.

Role of Operations Support Staff:

- *Receive all* Welcome Policy applications from district staff.
- *Review all* Welcome Policy applications to ensure completeness and accuracy.
- *Secure all* Welcome Policy applications and confidential documents (e.g. proof of income) for 3 years.
- *Destroy* (as per Divisional directions (yet to be determined)) **all** Welcome Policy applications and confidential documents deemed inactive after 3 years.
- *Track* Welcome Policy membership and usage on a quarterly basis including passes, punch cards, program usage and lost revenue.
- *Contribute* to divisional Welcome Policy reports.

Programs covered by Welcome Policy

All Parks & Recreation programs, listed in the Fun Guides, are covered including passes, memberships and punch cards.

Parks & Recreation Aquatic Leadership courses, listed in the separate "Aquatic Leadership Programs" brochure, are not covered since they are considered to be vocational training.

Programs offered through the Culture Division are not covered by the Welcome Policy.

Consumables

Consumables are covered through the Welcome Policy. The intent is to provide free access to eligible Welcome Policy applicants

Staff Guide

For further information, please refer to the Welcome Policy Staff Guide, which is available through the District Operations Support Staff or Call the **Welcome Policy Information Line at 416-338-2000.**