



REQUEST FOR DECISION

File # 0340-50, 7710-01

Report To: Mayor and Council
From: Director of Community Services
Presenter: Vanessa Harris
Subject: Administration Report No. 0036/24
Free Recreation Admissions for Emergency Support Services
Policy No. 155/24
Meeting: Regular Council
Meeting Date: 11 Mar 2024

RECOMMENDATION:

"THAT, the Free Recreation Admissions for Emergency Support Services Policy No. 155/24 be adopted as presented in Administration Report No. 0036/24."

CAO'S COMMENTS:

In the last few years, increasing wildfire activity has led to evacuations which have displaced many people. It has been helpful to be able to provide free recreation access during these disruptions. This has led to significant benefits in mental health and wellbeing for those affected people during this disruption to their lives by natural disaster. This benefit is particularly true for children. Changing this policy to reflect these new pressures allows us to meet this need in real time as we approach this year's fire season.

ALTERNATIVE RECOMMENDATION:

"THAT, Council receive Administration Report No. 0036/24 – Free Recreation Admissions for Emergency Support Services Policy No. 155/24, presented in Administration Report 0036/24, for information."

or

"THAT, the Free Recreation Admissions for Emergency Support Services Policy No. 155/24, as

presented in Administration Report 0036/24, be amended in the following way(s):

| (insert amendments)

AND THAT, the Free Recreation Admissions for Emergency Support Services Policy No. 155/24, be adopted as amended."

KEY ISSUES(S)/ CONCEPTS DEFINED:

Implementation of this policy will allow staff to hastily offer programs and services to communities affected by emergency situations resulting in evacuation. Recreation programs and services can provide a sense of stability, a safe space for gathering, and a mental health reprieve for those accessing Emergency Support Services (ESS).

RELEVANT POLICY:

Community Services Fees and Charges Bylaw

IMPLICATIONS OF RECOMMENDATION

COMPLIANCE WITH STRATEGIC PILLARS:

Vibrant Community – Invest in community safety, social, cultural, and recreational programs.

Relationships & Advocacy – Initiate and foster relationships and advocate to decision makers on the issues that impact our community and our neighbours.

Economic Development – Enhance community economic development to provide opportunities and sustainability for Fort St. John.

Organizational Excellence – Provide a healthy workplace that is inclusive and builds on our diversity, engagement, and sense of community.

Managing Assets – Build and manage assets that support the current and future needs of the community.

COMPLIANCE WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Key Values:

| Safety

- | Integrity
- | Respect
- | Responsiveness

Strategic Objectives:

- | Provide and support robust, affordable, and accessible wellness and recreation opportunities for the whole community
- | Foster community pride and a sense of belonging
- | Ensure accountable, transparent, and responsible financial management focused on value

GENERAL:

Implementation of this policy will allow staff to hastily offer programs and services to communities affected by Emergency Situations resulting in evacuation. Recreation programs and services can provide a sense of stability, a safe space for gathering, and a mental health reprieve for those accessing Emergency Support Services (ESS).

Individuals removed from their homes are found without their routines and belongings, and lacking the normalcy of their everyday lives. In addition to the basic needs provided by ESS, the City of Fort St. John can offer recreation programs and services as a source of stability, social gathering, and a mental reprieve for those affected by evacuations.

Free services provided over the past two years have cost minimal resources and little change in staffing levels. Communities, schools, and organizations have expressed gratitude when offered these services at a stressful and unpredictable time in their lives. An example of free services provided in 2022 for Hudson's Hope residents during the Battleship Mountain Fire is attached.

ORGANIZATIONAL:

FINANCIAL:

Most programs and services identified in the policy do not have an upper capacity limit, meaning that free attendees will not displace paying users when accessing services.

Lost revenue will fluctuate based on the number of evacuees registered at the Fort St. John ESS Reception Centre. The current rate for an adult to attend drop-in recreation services is \$6.00 plus GST.

In 2022 at the time of instating free admissions for Hudson's Hope Evacuees affected by the Battleship Mountain Fire, 613 evacuees had already registered with the Fort St. John ESS Reception Centre. If all individuals had been granted access to one adult drop-in pass, the total value of their admissions (with today's rate) totals \$3678.00, with no addition to staffing requirements.

FOLLOW UP ACTION:

Upon approval:

- | File and communicate Council Policy No. 155/24 included in Administration Report No. 0036/24
- | Recreation Department will develop processes to implement the policy
- | Recreation Department will keep records for future review of the policy

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION:

COMMUNICATION:

DEPARTMENTS CONSULTED ON THIS REPORT:

Emergency Support Services Director

Attachments:

**Free Recreation Admissions for Emergency Support Services Policy No.
155/24
Example of services previously provided to evacuees**

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Vanessa Harris, Recreation Manager

FREE RECREATION ADMISSIONS FOR EMERGENCY SUPPORT SERVICES POLICY
Council Policy No. 155/24

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to hastily offer programs and services to communities affected by Emergency Situations resulting in evacuation. Recreation programs and services can provide a sense of stability, a safe space for gathering, and a mental health reprieve for those affected by evacuation.

POLICY:

Recreation Facilities operated by the City of Fort St. John shall grant free admission to individuals and families registered with Emergency Support Services in Fort St. John. Individuals may be asked to provide proof of residence in the affected area, or proof of registration with the Emergency Support Services Reception Centre.

All recreation programs and services delivered by the City of Fort St. John are eligible, excluding partnerships and contracted programs and services.

The Recreation Manager, or designate, has the authority to approve these free admissions upon activation of Emergency Support Services Reception Centre in the City of Fort St. John.

At the discretion of the Recreation Manager, or designate, additional program hours and/or personnel may be introduced to meet the needs of the community at the time of the Emergency Support Services activations.

Free admissions do not apply to private facility rentals, or any restricted programs which the individual would not be permitted to attend under regular circumstances (for example, age-restricted programs).

Free admissions expire upon the closure of the Emergency Support Services Reception Centre and do not have a transferrable cash-value.



Children & Youth Programs and Recreation Amenities

Hudson's Hope Evacuation & School Closure – September 13-18, 2022

Drop-in Rates

Drop-in rates are FREE for Hudson's Hope residents when providing Government ID or other proof of residency upon admission.

Public Amenities

Pomeroy Sport Centre (9324 96 St)

Indoor Play Structure

Table Tennis (equipment sign-out available)

Basketball court (equipment sign-out available)

Indoor Walking Track

PETRONAS Free Skate Sunday 1:30-6:30pm

Outdoor Parks

See Page 7 of Recreation & Leisure Guide

Drop-in Programs

Tumble Time

Kids Arena Fieldhouse (9615 96 Ave)
Tuesday and Thursdays 10:30am-12:45 pm

Bouncing Beans

Kids Arena Fieldhouse (9615 96 Ave)
Sundays 1:30-3 pm

Fitness Programs

Zumba

Pomeroy Sport Centre Studio (9324 96 St)
Wednesdays 5:30-6:30pm

Country Dance Lessons

Pomeroy Sport Centre Studio (9324 96 St)
Thursdays 7-8pm

Feather Fit

Pomeroy Sport Centre Studio (9324 96 St)
Monday and Thursdays 10:30-11:15am

Pomeroy Sport Centre Ice Schedule & Information



September Ice Schedule (September 6 - 30, 2022)							
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Drop-in Hockey Ages 16+ West/East Rink	11:30am - 12:45pm	11:30am - 12:45pm	11:30am - 12:45pm	11:30am - 12:45pm			
Public Skate Oval		6 - 8pm		6 - 8pm	4 - 7pm	12 - 3pm	PETRONAS Free Skate 1:30 - 3:30pm 4:30 - 6:30pm
Slow Skate East/West Rink	10 - 11am		1:30 - 2:30pm				

The Pomeroy Sport Centre is closed all STAT Holidays. Schedules are subject to change without notice.

Drop-In Hockey

Full equipment must be worn. All participants must sign in and pay at the front desk prior to play.

Public Skate

Everyone welcome. Children 8 years and younger must be accompanied on the ice by a guardian of 16 years and older.

Slow Skate

Have a leisurely skate while socializing with others. This session is ideal for young children, beginners, or individuals who simply want to skate at a slower pace.

Note: Skate sessions do not have age restrictions and are based on skating ability. Children 8 years and younger must be accompanied on the ice by a guardian of 16 years of age or older.

Skate Rentals

Skate rentals are available from Hard Edge Sports, located on the first floor of the Pomeroy Sport Centre. Rentals cost \$6.00 per pair. For more information, contact the shop directly at 250-785-1222. **Note:** No shoes permitted on ice. All users must wear skates.

Skating Rates

	DROP-IN	6 Months	1 Year
YOUTH (6-18 YRS.)	\$3.50	\$18.50	\$35.00
ADULT (19-64 YRS.)	\$5.75	\$28.50	\$50.00
SENIOR (65+ YRS.)	\$3.50	\$18.50	\$35.00
FAMILY	\$14.00	\$70.00	\$130.00

Taxes apply to drop-in fees.



Walking Track Hours

Monday - Friday 6am - 9pm

Saturday & Sunday 9am - 9pm

Closed all Statutory Holidays



Visitor Centre Hours

Monday - Friday 9am - 8pm

Saturday & Sunday 10am - 6pm

Closed all Statutory Holidays

Free skate rentals provided by Hard Edge Sports on the first floor of the Pomeroy Sport Centre.