

## Faculty of Kinesiology – Outdoor Field Closure & User Guidelines

**Purpose:** To outline field closure and facility permit client responsibility guidelines for use by units in the Faculty of Kinesiology (Academics, Dinos Athletics, Active Living, Olympic Oval) who book the space.

### **Accountability**

1. The Dean of the Faculty is responsible for administering this guideline and is accountable for management of the outdoor fields.
2. The Dean appoints the Faculty's Kinesiology Operations (Kin Ops) unit to steward the guidelines.
3. Kin Ops is responsible for booking, updating user guidelines, coordinating maintenance and renovation, and determining the open/closed status of the outdoor playing fields.
4. The Kin Ops - Facility Operators will determine the status of the fields daily and update the website.
5. The Kin Ops - Facility Booking Office will assist with communication to clients following a clear field closure.
6. Booked field clients are responsible for following the guidelines and making appropriate decisions during conditional closures.

### **Framework**

Kin Ops acknowledges the common interest among UCalgary Athletics, Active Living Intramurals, and the outdoor playing field internal client groups in upholding turf standards and minimizing the risk of injury associated with adverse field and weather conditions. The UCalgary Grounds department were consulted to help establish uniformity in assessing field readiness, as well as the guidelines set forth by the Sport Turf Manager Association, the City of Calgary, the City of Edmonton, and other Municipal Cities. The resulting guidelines have been formulated with a focus on safety and maintenance considerations.

When determining field playability, the safety of participants is paramount. However, substantial consideration must also be given to the potential damage of the grass fields and the length of time required for the field to recover. Playing on a wet, muddy field poses risk to both the athletes and the field itself. The constant trudging through the mud can lead to soil compaction, impeding the flow of air, water, and nutrients to the grass roots. Without adequate maintenance practices to alleviate compaction, the persistent stress on the plants can result in the eventual loss of grass, leaving behind a barren and hardened surface. Balancing the safety of participants with the preservation of the playing surface highlights the importance of informed decisions regarding field use.

### **Field Use Guidelines:**

1. Anyone using a field are required to have a permitted booking and must be able to reference their facility permit on site if required.
2. Facility permit clients are required to carry insurance and are responsible for any damage their group may cause.
3. Each facility permit client is responsible to ensure that every player, official, parent of players, and spectator attending is aware of the field guidelines.
4. Facility permit clients are required to be respectful and considerate to all staff, other field users and community residents.

5. Dogs are not permitted whether on or off leash.
6. Motor vehicles are not permitted in any of the fields unless written or verbal permission to do so has been received from the Kin Ops. Vehicles need to park in approved UCalgary or University District parking lots. To review approved parking options please visit <https://www.ucalgary.ca/ancillary/parking/parking-permits/find-parking>
7. Sales of food, merchandise, possession and/or consumption of alcoholic beverages are not permitted unless it is for an approved special event.
8. For concerns with porta-potties please contact Kin Ops at [kinesops@ucalgary.ca](mailto:kinesops@ucalgary.ca).

## Field Closures

*The following guidelines are justifiable reasons to close the fields:*

### Field Condition Based Closure (Grass Fields)

#### Water:

- Standing water present on any part of the playing field. An indicator includes footprints accompanied by the accumulation of water.
- The presence of visible water or the audible "squish" sound while walking.
  - Rain may be a cause for closure either if a drizzle with a long length of time or a hard rain. The deciding factor will depend on field condition (how wet the field is).
- Snow that forms a layer (a footprint can form) on the field. Snow that is melting on the field.
- Hail can be a risk to player safety and create compaction damage to the grass and turf fields.

#### Frost:

- Frost or frozen areas are not playable until surface conditions have thawed and drained.

#### Mud:

- The presence of clearly visible large mud areas on the playing field.

### Client Discretion - Environment Based Closure (Grass and Turf Fields):

#### Thunder and Lightning:

- Thunder within audible range may be indicative of incoming lightning. Lightning is considered severe and close enough to the facility that it would pose an immediate danger to facility permit clients.

#### Air Quality (Smoke):

- If Environment Canada website ([https://weather.gc.ca/airquality/pages/abaq-002\\_e.html](https://weather.gc.ca/airquality/pages/abaq-002_e.html)) reports a level of air quality (often due to smoke) at 7 or above.

### Client Discretion

- Client discretion means that facility permit clients have a greater responsibility in determining whether to play or not to play on a sports field, based on the criteria identified above for field playability and weather safety. It is in the best interest of all players to ensure that fields are not used when conditions are unfavorable to prevent damage to the playing surface and increased risk to player safety.
- USports and UCalgary Intramurals governing body rule book will be the default for regulations for air quality and thunder and lightning on when to stop play and return if required.

### Notice of Field Closure

In the event of a field closure, Kin Ops will update the field closure website

<https://kinesiology.ucalgary.ca/contacts/booking-space/athletic-field-closures> no later than 4:00 pm.

For environment-based closures, Kin Ops may post a "conditional closure" and then client discretion must be exercised at the time of the facility booking. If Kin Ops fails to post or notify clients "user discretion" is applied and the above guidelines must be adhered to and applied prior to using the fields.

Loss of booking time due to closure is unfortunate, however, not adhering to these guidelines does not

balance the annual maintenance and repair costs required to keep the fields in good condition. Kin Ops is stewarded to make the final decision to close the fields and is not responsible for any resulting client impacts.

**Seasonal Closure:**

Kin Ops department will engage UCalgary Grounds and all stakeholder department leads on the timing of the irrigation system shut down and the seasonal closure of the outdoor fields.

**References:**

1. Athletic Parks and Sport Fields. City of Calgary. [Check the status of a field \(calgary.ca\)](#)
2. Bylaw No. 7767 The Recreation Facilities and Parks Usage Bylaw, 1998. The Council of The City of Saskatoon. [BYLAW NO \(saskatoon.ca\)](#)
3. Sport Field Status, City of Burnaby. [Sports Field Status | City of Burnaby](#)
4. Sports Fields: Inclement Weather and Air Quality. City of Edmonton. [Sports Fields | City of Edmonton](#)
5. Sport Field Information Guide. City of Saskatoon. [sport field information guide \(saskatoon.ca\)](#)
6. Improving Field Safety for Athletes. Sport Turf Managers Association. [Improving-Field-Safety-for-Athletes-FINAL-web.pdf \(sportsfieldmanagement.org\)](#)
7. NSW Government. <https://www.sport.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-04/drought-management-practices-brochure.pdf>

## Appendix A

**Coyote Awareness:** <https://www.ucalgary.ca/facilities/initiatives-programs/programs/be-wildlife-smart>

To minimize risks and ensure uninterrupted use of our fields, all participants must follow these safety measures:

1. **Steer Clear of Reserve/Natural Area:** Please avoid entering or getting close to these areas before, during, or after games.
2. **Avoid Bringing Backpacks:** Avoid bringing backpacks to the field if possible. If necessary, please gather all backpacks on the north side of the field. This ensures they are placed away from the Reserve/Natural area and are not enticing to wildlife. These bags must be grouped together and not scattered.
3. **No Food and Beverages:** Please avoid bringing food or drinks to the fields, including in backpacks. Such items may attract wildlife. Please do not feed wildlife.
4. **Group Exit:** After games, promptly exit the field area as a collective group rather than individually or in small numbers.
5. **Cleanliness:** Ensure no items or waste are left behind.
6. **Dog Restrictions:** Dogs are not permitted on the fields for their safety and that of others.

**Coyote Encounter Guidelines:**

- Remain calm: Avoid screaming, running, or turning away.
- Protect: Immediately pick up small children and pets.
- Retreat: Walk away without panicking.

If a coyote approaches:

- Situation Evaluation: The coyote might be protecting its territory or young. Ensure you are not blocking its escape route.
- Display Assertiveness: Loudly shout, "Go away!" and make yourself appear larger. Use an umbrella or a snapping plastic bag as a deterrent if needed.
- Gradual Exit: Consistently distance yourself without turning your back.

Please be vigilant to any unusual coyote behaviour, such as rummaging through or snatching bags, charging people, or outright nipping attacks.

Contact the University of Calgary Campus Security immediately at 403.220.5333 for negative or aggressive coyote encounters.

For any additional queries or concerns, please contact Kinesiology Operations 403-333-5686, [kinesops@ucalgary.ca](mailto:kinesops@ucalgary.ca).