

BLOOMFIELD PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL AFFAIRS

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Overview

The Bloomfield Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs Financial Assistance Program has been established to provide financial assistance to families who would not otherwise be able to afford to enroll their children in Bloomfield Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs activities. Funding for this Financial Assistance Program will be secured through private donations and grants. However, the Bloomfield Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs Department can provide funding for this program, if needed, in an amount not to exceed \$4,000 per year.

Eligibility

The administrative staff of the Bloomfield Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs Department will be responsible for determining the eligibility of each applicant. The eligibility requirements will be the same as those for families to qualify for the Free and Reduced Price School Meal Program (FRMP) offered by the Bloomfield Board of Education.

When applying for an award for a school-aged child, the parent/guardian must submit the following information:

- Free and Reduced Price School Meal Program documentation
- Bloomfield Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs Financial Assistance Program Application;

If the child is not enrolled in the School District's FRMP, the parent/guardian alternatively must supply the same information to the Director that would be required to apply for the FRMP through the Bloomfield Board of Education.

If the applicant does not meet the FRMP criteria and the request for assistance is based on "special circumstances" (i.e. sudden loss of employment, family illness, death etc.) the Director will request appropriate documentation.

Based on this information, the Bloomfield Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs administrative staff will then will determine award eligibility.

Awards

To ensure awards are available to the greatest number of children possible, awards are limited to a maximum of (\$125.00 per calendar year per child). The family maximum for a calendar year is \$375.00.

- Families eligible for ***free lunch*** in the FRMP are eligible to receive up to 50% of the respective registration fee, or \$60.00, whichever is less. The applicant will be responsible for the remaining balance above and beyond the \$60.00 financial aid.
- Families eligible for ***reduced lunch*** in the FRMP are eligible to receive up to 25% of the respective registration fee, or \$60.00, whichever is less. The applicant will be responsible for the remaining balance above and beyond the \$60.00 financial aid.
- For families temporarily unable to afford the registration fee (i.e. sudden loss of employment, family illness, death etc.) to enroll a child in an activity, but do not qualify for the FRMP, their application will be reviewed by the Director. Eligibility for assistance in the case of special circumstances requires the approval of the Director based on provided documentation.
- Approved applicants must pay any balance above the allotment before the start of the program. If it is not paid the applicant may be subject to removal from the activity.
- Any additional costs that are not part of the registration fee will not be covered by the Financial Assistance Program and are the responsibility of the participant (equipment, uniforms etc)
- Awards cannot be transferred to another person, program, activity or event.

Allocation of Funds

Awards are dependent upon the availability of funds and are awarded on a first come, first served basis. To ensure funds are available throughout the entire calendar year, the total funds raised for the Financial Assistance Program Fund calendar year will be divided by four and 25% of those funds will be equally available for all four seasons (winter, spring, summer, fall)

Any funds remaining at the end of each quarter will be equally distributed to the remaining quarters for the calendar year. All unused funds at the end of the calendar year will be assigned to the following calendar year.

Dedicated Donations

Private donations may be designated for specific participants in writing to the Director. When a donation is made by a private donor and designated by the donor for a particular individual, the program dollar limits and time restrictions do not apply. However, the amount of the designated donation **IS** included in the recipient's eligibility calculations for future awards. (For example, Donor A may make a donation exceeding the \$125.00 annual limit for John Doe's ***total registration fees*** and makes additional donations designated for John Doe throughout the year. However, John Doe is not eligible to receive any additional funds from the general Financial Assistance Program for the remainder of the calendar year. There is no maximum family limit to Dedicated Donations.

Funding Sources and Management

The Bloomfield Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs Department will solicit private donations from local civic organizations, businesses and other private donors. A yearly fundraiser may also be planned. All donations will be made to the "Bloomfield Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs Department" and earmarked for the "Financial Assistance Program." The Bloomfield Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs Department will issue a thank you letter to all donors.

Process and Audit Trail

- Donations received for this program will be deposited into the Bloomfield Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs DEDICATED RECREATION FUND and all donations will be earmarked as such. Separate quarterly and yearly accounting ledgers will be kept throughout the calendar year. These deposits will be added to the monthly deposit accounting sheet and will be sent to the Finance Director via email on a monthly basis.
- Eligible recipients, approved for assistance, will be registered for the program/activity via the Bloomfield Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs on line registration system via Community Pass. The participant will be entered into Community Pass and "Financial Assistance Program" will be internally noted on their registration
- At the end of each month, the Director of the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs Department will submit to the Finance Department a monthly accounting of donations taken in and financial assistance given out.