



**HUNTER
SPORTS
CENTRE**

Hunter Sports Centre Policy

Multi Use Safety Policy Athletics Stadium

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Policy Statement

Hunter Sports Centre is committed to providing a safe, well-managed, and inclusive environment for all participants, coaches, officials, visitors, and hirers using the athletics track and infield area.

As a multi-sport venue, we recognise that concurrent athletics and field sport activities can create increased risks—particularly when projectiles, shared space, and mixed traffic patterns are present.

This policy sets out the minimum safety requirements, behavioural expectations, and operational controls necessary to manage those risks and ensure that all activities occur safely and responsibly. All users must comply with this policy as a condition of entry and booking.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Establish clear safety rules governing the shared use of the athletics track and infield.
- Prevent collisions, projectile-related injuries, and unsafe interactions between athletics and field sport participants.
- Provide a consistent framework for scheduling, supervision, equipment setup, communication, and emergency response.
- Ensure compliance with relevant workplace health and safety responsibilities, venue hire conditions, and risk-management obligations.
- Support a positive, respectful, and cooperative training environment for all users.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All athletics and football participants (ages 8 to adult for athletics; 13 to adult for football)
- Coaches, volunteers, officials, and supervisors
- Visiting clubs, hirers, and community groups
- Parents, spectators, and visitors
- All activities conducted on the track, infield, run-off zones, entry/exit points, and surrounding aprons

The policy covers:

- Scheduled athletics sessions
- Scheduled football training sessions
- Any mixed-use situations where the track and infield are occupied simultaneously
- Event days, holiday programs, and hired sessions
- Emergency procedures and incident reporting



Policy Guidelines

Training Windows & Scheduling

To minimise risk, athletics and field sports training must occur during the approved times

Football activity is permitted on the infield during athletics track operating under approved "Low-Risk Mixed Use" conditions (see below).

Mixed-Use Safety Rules (When Clash of usage are unavoidable)

If an unavoidable overlap occurs, the following restrictions apply:

Football

- NO shooting on goals
- NO long or lofted passes (>20 metres)
- Ball must stay on the ground
- Activities restricted to the centre-third of the infield
- No drills that generate uncontrolled ball movement
- Athletes must check before crossing track
- Coaches must assign ball-retrieval roles to minimise stray balls

Athletics

- Lanes 1-3 Closed
- Lanes 4 - 6 reserved for fast work
- Warm-ups limited to lanes 7-10 and approved apron sections
- Athletes must check before crossing lanes

Supervision

Venue attended is present and supervisor has full authority to:

- Stop football drills
- Redesignate zones
- Relocate or separate groups
- Terminate mixed-use if unsafe

Zoning, Equipment & Space Management

To maintain safe and consistent facility use:

- A 3-metre clear run-off zone must be maintained inside and outside the track.
- No bags, balls, cones, chairs, water bottles, prams, or equipment are permitted on the track or inside lanes.
- Football goals must be anchored or secured when in use.
- If goals are positioned near track edges, no active shooting is allowed.
- All equipment must be removed immediately after training.



Athletics Field Throwing – Safe Use of Infield Zones

Athletics field throwers must use the infield only in accordance with approved training times and designated throwing zones. To protect all venue users from projectile hazards, the following rules apply:

- Throwing activities may only take place during scheduled athletics-only sessions and never during mixed-use times with football or general running in progress.

All throws must be conducted:

- From the designated throwing circle, runway, or marked throwing sector.
- Under the supervision of a qualified athletics coach.

A clearly defined exclusion zone must be established around the active throwing area. No person may enter this zone except authorised coaches, spotters, or designated retrievers.

Throwers must only retrieve implements when:

- The sector is fully clear,
- All other throwers have stopped and acknowledged the call to retrieve,
- The supervising coach signals it is safe.

Athletics coaches are responsible for ensuring:

- All throwers understand and follow safe-throw procedures,
- Spectators remain outside the throwing areas,
- Implements are stored safely when not in use.

Coach Responsibilities

Coaches must:

- Complete a 2-minute pre-session coordination check-in venue attendant
- Ensure drills comply with all restrictions in this policy.
- Supervise participants closely and position themselves to control the group.
- Brief athletes on safety rules, retrieval routes, and prohibited behaviours.
- Report all incidents and near-misses to the Event attendant immediately.

Divot Repair and Surface Maintenance Responsibilities

To maintain a safe, even, and competition-quality infield surface, all athletics field throwers and coaches must: Inspect the throwing area after each training block or individual throw series for any divots, turf tears, depressions, or disturbed grass.

Repair divots immediately, ensuring:

- Turf is pressed back firmly into place,
- Any loose soil is compacted,
- Surface irregularities are levelled to prevent trip hazards or ball deflection hazards for other sports.

Where divot damage is significant or unable to be repaired by hand:

- Coaches must report it to the Venue Attendant immediately.
- The area may be temporarily closed until maintenance staff can make repairs.

Throwing implements must not be dragged, dropped, or thrown onto non-designated areas, as this causes surface damage and creates hazards.

Failure to maintain the throwing surface may result in:

- Suspension of throwing privileges,
- Additional grounds or maintenance fees for club hirers if damage is repeated or severe.



Shared-Space Protection During Athletics Throwing

To prevent conflict between field throwers and other venue users:

When the infield is allocated to athletics throwers, all other sports must remain outside the infield unless explicitly permitted.

During these periods:

- Runners must remain on the track only,
- Football activities are prohibited on or near throwing sectors,
- Access across the infield is to be discussed with Venue Attendant and in approved safety zone area.

The Venue Attendant has full authority to:

- Stop throwing immediately if other groups enter the infield,
- Redirect foot traffic,
- Restrict access to maintain safe separation at all times.

Access to Warm up area

To support safe and efficient multi-sport operations, access to the warm-up field and track warm-up lanes may be permitted under specific conditions. Because these areas must remain safe, uncrowded, and controlled at all times, access is not automatic and is granted only when it does not compromise safety or venue operations.

Discretionary Access

Access to the warm-up field and track warm-up lanes is granted at the discretion of Hunter Sports Centre Management. This includes all athletics groups, field event groups, football teams, and external hirers. Access decisions are based on:

- current bookings
- venue capacity
- the nature and risk level of activities
- staffing and supervision levels
- weather, surface conditions, and maintenance requirements

Multi-Zone Usage Periods

During periods where multi-zone usage is in place (e.g., concurrent athletics, football, or field events), management may permit additional groups to access the warm-up facility only when it can be done safely and without interference. Conditions of use apply



Venue Attendant Responsibilities

To ensure the safe and effective operation of the athletics track and football infield during all training sessions, the Venue Attendant is responsible for overseeing safety, coordinating user groups, and enforcing compliance with this policy. The Venue Attendant must remain on-site, visible, and available throughout all mixed-use or high-traffic sessions.

Pre-Session Responsibilities

Before any session begins, the Venue Attendant:

Conduct a Facility Safety Inspection

- Ensure all lanes are clear of equipment, personal items, hazards, or debris.
- Confirm that run-off zones are open and unobstructed, maintaining the required 3-metre safety buffer around the track.
- Verify that portable football goals are properly anchored or secured to prevent tipping or movement during use.
- Ensure all safety and warning signage is visible, upright, and unobstructed at entry points and along the track apron.

Coordinate With Coaches

Conduct a brief coach huddle (2 minutes) with both athletics and football coaches when applicable.

This should confirm:

- Session format and drill zones
- Any overlap management requirements
- Restricted activities (e.g., no shooting or long passes during mixed use)
- Retrieval pathways and communication procedures

Responsibilities During the Session

Throughout all active training periods, the Venue Attendant must maintain vigilance and actively supervise the venue:

Monitor for Projectile Hazards

- Continuously monitor ball incursions onto the running track or apron.
- If a football enters the track twice within 10 minutes, the Venue Attendant must stop activities and initiate corrective action.

Manage Space & Crowding

Adjust or direct coaches to modify drills if:

- Participant numbers create congestion
- Athletes are drifting outside assigned zones
- Football activity poses increased risk to runners
- Relocate groups if environmental conditions (wind, lighting) increase risk.

Enforce Safety Compliance

- Require immediate correction of unsafe behaviours, equipment use, or zone violations.
- Suspend or halt activities where safety cannot be maintained.

Post-Session Responsibilities

After all training concludes, the Venue Attendant:

Coordinate Session Close-Down

Conduct a short debrief with coaches to discuss:

- Any incidents or near-misses
- Improvements needed for future sessions
- Scheduling or zoning adjustments

Documentation & Reporting

- Complete an Incident Report for any injuries, near-misses, or repeated ball incursions.
- Submit reports to venue management within 24 hours.
- Note any equipment damage, lighting issues, or surface hazards requiring maintenance.



Authority

The Venue Attendant is authorised to:

- Stop any activity that poses immediate risk
- Modify or terminate mixed-use sessions
- Direct athletes, coaches, and spectators to comply with safety requirements
- Close the field, lanes, or infield space if conditions become unsafe

Failure of coaches or clubs to comply with the Venue Attendant's directions may result in disciplinary action or suspension of venue access.

Participant Expectations

All athletes must:

- Comply with Venue Attendant and coach instructions and venue signage.
- Be aware of other users and check before crossing lanes.
- Never kick or throw balls outside designated zones.
- Retrieve balls via the perimeter only—never across active lanes.
- Refrain from behaviours that compromise safety (e.g., horseplay, unnecessary sprinting through mixed areas).

Spectator & Parent Expectations

Spectators must:

- Remain in designated viewing areas
- Keep children not participating off the infield and track
- Follow staff directions immediately
- Ensure prams, bags, and chairs remain clear of run-off and walk way areas

Risk Warnings & Signage

The following signage must be displayed at entry points:

- "Shared Venue – Athletics & Football In Use.
- Follow Staff Directions.
- No Power Shooting or Long Passing During Open Track."

Coaches must reinforce these warnings to athletes prior to every session.

Incident Management & Escalation

Any ball entering the track twice within 10 minutes triggers an immediate stop-and-reset.

Repeated incursions require the Venue Attendant to:

- Address field sports, Pause training
- Modify or relocate drills
- Terminate the mixed-use session if ongoing and necessary

All incidents must be logged within 24 hours.

Insurance & Compliance

All hirers and clubs must:

- Hold a minimum \$20 million public liability insurance
- Provide a current Certificate of Currency before booking
- Comply with all terms of hire and this policy

Understand that breaches may result in suspension or cancellation of booking and access rights to the facility



Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed:

- Quarterly
- After any significant incident
- When activity levels or training groups change
- When risk assessments indicate updates are required