



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrew Gounardes

Senator Andrew Gounardes, Congressman Max Rose, Councilman Justin Brannan and Councilman Brad Lander Call for Youth Sports Permits to Resume

ANDREW GOUNARDES August 24, 2020

| ISSUE: NYS SENATOR ANDREW GOUNARDES, CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC; COVID-19, YOUTH SPORTS PERMITS



Brooklyn, NY - Southern Brooklyn elected officials called on the City to provide permits for youth sports after the City stated that they would not be issuing permits for youth sports leagues, despite the fact that these have been allowed to do so for low-to-moderate risk youth sports since the commencement of Phase 3 on July 6. Senator Andrew Gounardes,

Congressman Max Rose, Councilman Justin Brannan and Councilman Brad Lander joined children, families and coaches at Shore Road Park to call on the city to revoke this indefinite suspension of community-based youth sports leagues in city parks and for Parks Department to resume issuing permits so that children can once again enjoy safe, outdoor recreation.

“Children and families are desperate to be able to partake in safe, responsible activities despite this pandemic. As transmission remains low and students already are taking to public and private parks, there is no viable reason why youth sports permits shouldn’t be renewed. The state has allowed outdoor youth sports to resume beginning in July, and it is high time that we allowed our children to go outside and enjoy outdoor activities that are low-risk for the spread of COVID. If the numbers worsen, we must follow the science and reevaluate; but for now, I urge the Mayor and the Parks Commissioner to bring back youth sports permits. It’s a matter of health, safety and equity,” said **State Senator Andrew Gounardes**.

“The Mayor’s scattershot approach to what’s allowed and what isn’t continues to mystify and frustrate families and small businesses. There’s no rhyme, reason, or adherence to the reopening standards. Youth sports have been allowed to resume, and in many cases have without issue, yet the Mayor is still refusing to issue permits to far too many leagues. Let our kids play and play safely,” said **Congressman Max Rose**.

“Our local parks are one of the last egalitarian things we have in this city. And now with COVID, it is more important than ever that everyone plays by the same rules and that the rules make sense! By allowing group sports but not issuing permits, City Hall is sending a message that pickup games are OK but organized, permitted, youth league sports are somehow not OK. This idea completely defies all available logic. First and foremost, we want people to be safe. Issuing permits that ensure park activity is done in accordance with

current public health and safety guidelines will go a long way in improving the safety and well-being of children and their families. Let the kids play ball!" said **Councilman Justin Brannan**.

"Opening ball fields for pick up games while denying permits to organized youth sports makes no sense. After months of social distancing, our kids are desperate for safe ways to get outside, exercise and see their friends. Issuing permits to ensure that ball playing follows guidelines is a much more sensible way to ensure health and safety," said **Councilmember Brad Lander**.

"We are deeply dismayed by the City's decision not to issue Fall field permits in NYC. We find this to be insulting to hundreds of thousands of kids and adults who already safely play organized sports across our city. There is a solution already in place - field permits - to create a safe and orderly environment at the ball fields. City Hall and the Parks Dept just needs to use it, for the health and well-being of our residents during such a challenging year," said **Jesse DeLorenzo, President of Brooklyn City FC**.