

## City of Orange Community Garden Rules and Regulations

The City of Orange Community Gardens will be operated on a cooperative basis led by volunteer Gardeners who form the Community Garden Oversight Committee (CGOC). All Gardeners are expected to follow the Rules and Regulations outlined herein in order to maintain the privilege of leasing a garden plot from the City. For the purposes of this document, “Gardener” is defined as the person who has entered into a lease agreement with the City of Orange for use of public property at the Community Gardens.

**Rule 1** - Garden plots will be assigned by the City of Orange on a first come, first received basis. A waitlist will be maintained to track the date of requests received in excess of the number of plots available for lease. Only city of Orange residents are eligible to lease plots. Proof of residency (current utility bill) will be required with application and during the annual lease renewal period. Gardeners who were renters prior to January 1, 2012 who are not residents are grandfathered in. Assignments from the waiting list will be made in order of the date at which written requests are received in the following manner:

1. The City contacts the prospective gardener and requests they review the Rules and Regulations.
2. The prospective gardener contacts Co-Chairs to take a tour of the garden.
3. Upon approval of the potential gardener by the Co-Chairs, the prospective gardener is invited to join the Community Garden and continue in the process.
4. The new gardener goes to the City to sign lease, Rules & Regulations, and pay.

**Rule 2** - The City of Orange shall be the sole authority on all matters pertaining to who is the current occupant of each garden plot and to where boundaries between garden plots rightly lie.

**Rule 3** - Each garden plot is available for the sole, personal use of the gardener to whom the plot is assigned so long as the lease and payment is current. The gardener/group to whom it is assigned must work the plot and only use it for gardening purposes. Gardeners may add an additional co-gardener to their plot. Both gardeners must be City of Orange residents and adhere to the Community Garden Rules and Regulations at all times. All crops derived from a plot are the sole property of the gardener(s) to whom it is assigned. The City and the CGOC are not responsible for items that are tampered with or stolen.

**Rule 4** - No gardener shall carry out any gardening activities in such a way as to unreasonably interfere with the activities of neighboring gardeners.

**Rule 5** - Gardeners and visitors are prohibited from picking crops or damaging the plot or crops of another gardener (except with the gardener’s expressed approval). While friends or family members may provide incidental or temporary help to a gardener in maintaining their plot, it is the responsibility of the gardener to actively maintain their assigned plot(s). Any non-gardener working a plot must be accompanied, at all times, by the gardener assigned to that plot. Failure to comply is grounds for termination of garden lease. Damage done to other gardeners’ plots may also result in forfeiture of lease.

**Rule 6** - Each gardener is responsible for demonstrating at all times that their assigned plot(s) is being utilized as an active, productive garden and is regularly cared for. A garden plot clear of weeds, trash, and debris demonstrates effective utilization and care. If help weeding is needed due to a gardener’s illness or injury, they may request to get assistance from other gardeners. The Accountability Committee is comprised of gardeners who are responsible for ensuring all gardeners maintain their plots in compliance of garden rules and regulations. After an accountability review is completed of each plot, any gardeners with plots out of compliance will be emailed.

**Course of action when plots are non-compliant:**

1. Email will be sent giving notice of non-compliance and required course of action (City staff will be notified).
2. If there is no significant improvement within 2 weeks, another email will be sent.
3. If there is no significant improvement a week later, the City will be notified and a final letter informing the gardener that they have forfeited their plot will be sent.
4. The Maintenance Committee will then clear the garden. The gardener’s \$100 deposit will be credited to the “Garden Maintenance and Repair Fund” at the City to be used for garden expenses such as irrigation repair, rodent eradication, etc.

**Accountability Dates for 2021**

Saturday, February 20, 2021	9 a.m.
Saturday, April 24, 2021	9 a.m.
Saturday, June 19, 2021	9 a.m.
Saturday, August 21, 2021	9 a.m.
Saturday, October 30, 2021	9 a.m.
Saturday, December 11, 2021	9 a.m.

Any gardener deemed non-compliant on three accountability reviews within a 12-month period will need to vacate their plot(s) immediately. They will have two weeks to clear their plot(s) before their deposit is forfeited. The three non-compliant reviews can include those accumulated in two different lease years.

**Rule 7** - Trees and shrubs taller than 6 feet are prohibited. Trellises and plant supports shall be no higher than 8 feet tall. If there are issues regarding one gardener’s trees, trellises or supports creating too much shade for a neighboring garden then the CGOC either must try to get the two gardeners to come to an agreement or make a decision as to whether or not the objects creating the shade need to be removed.

**Rule 8** - Fences erected around garden plots must be no higher than 6ft and be of such construction that they can be taken down at any time. Fences also should be made of material that poses minimal danger to birds (Mylar is permitted to deter birds, but cannot be attached to fence) and blends in with the environment. Brightly colored materials such as orange or lime green are not permitted on fencing, nor is metallic streamers, neon-colored ribbons or flashers. Fences must allow visual access to the garden plot from the outside.

**Rule 9** - Gardeners may not maintain ponds in plots.

**Rule 10** - Furniture used in garden plots must be specifically designed for outdoor use. Household and office furniture is prohibited. Furniture that is broken or not deemed aesthetically pleasing by the CGOC must be removed. Small storage bins will be allowed to be placed in garden plots. Storage bins may not

be larger than 4 feet wide and no higher than 7 feet high. A low profile storage bin cannot be more than 4 feet wide. A high profile storage bin cannot be more than 3 feet wide.

**Rule 11** - Garden plot renewal begins December 1, 2020 and ends December 18, 2020. The new (Garden) year begins January 1, 2021. Gardeners who gardened the previous year have the option of renewing or canceling their Garden Plot Agreement with the City. (Regular fees per plot apply.) Unclaimed plots may be reassigned after the December registration. Gardeners who choose not to renew their Community Garden Agreement must clear their plot(s) by the last work day of the year. Gardeners will be limited to no more than two plots per household. One plot at a time will be awarded per household. Additional members of the same household wanting to lease a second plot will be placed at the bottom of the waiting list in order to serve as many interested gardeners (and households) as possible. Location of second plot is not guaranteed to be adjacent to current plot.

Please note that gardeners currently in the process of clearing accountability are ineligible to be on the waitlist for a second plot and will be removed from the waitlist until accountability is cleared. The final decision to award a second plot to a gardener is at the discretion of the City and Oversight Committee.

**Rule 12** - Full payment of annual garden plot fee is required at the time of submission of the Garden Plot Agreement.

**Rule 13** - The Community Garden is open from dawn until dusk, seven days a week.

**Rule 14** - Metal and/or wooden stakes throughout the site are intended as permanent boundary markers and should not be moved without the permission of the CGOC.

**Rule 15** - Be considerate of your neighbors and garden within your plot boundaries. Do not plant sprawling crops or tall ones that might interfere with other plots. Harvest only from your assigned plot.

**Rule 16** - All plots are subject to inspections by the City at any time for compliance.

**Rule 17** – The Community Garden is an organic garden. As such, organic products and natural gardening practices (such as use of vinegar, steam, etc.) are standard. Consult with chairpersons if you have questions about acceptable methods.

**Rule 18** - Pets are not allowed in the Community Garden.

**Rule 19** - Children and visitors are required to be supervised at all times and are expected to be considerate and not disturb other gardeners and their plants.

**Rule 20** - Any gardener is welcomed to post messages or information pertaining to the garden or items of interest about gardens in the bulletin board. The oversight committee will have the final say as to whether or not material is appropriate for posting on the bulletin board.

**Rule 21** - Unless using an automated watering system, unattended watering is not permitted. Gardeners should water or enter only the garden plot that is assigned to them. Before leaving the Community Garden, gardeners are expected to check faucets to ensure water is turned off. Gardeners must notify the co-chairs immediately of any leaks in the water line.

**Rule 22** – Watering is restricted to certain methods.

Method	Limits
Low flow/soaker hose	-
Hand watering: Bucket or hose with positive water shut off nozzle	15 minutes per plot

The Oversight Committee will monitor the water usage restrictions by all gardeners. The City reserves the right to modify these requirements to comply with state and local mandates.

**Rule 23** - No trash or debris of any kind should be left at the site. Before leaving the Community Garden, gardeners are required to deposit trash, weeds included, and debris in the designated trash bin, as well as, ensure their plot area is neat and tidy. Gardeners are limited to one bucket of trash per week. The garden trash bin is for trash generated at the garden only. No household waste is to be placed in the garden trash bin.

**Rule 24** - If for any reason a gardener is no longer able to maintain their plot(s), written notice must be given to the City and chairpersons with explanation of how the plot will be cleared. Deposits will only be returned if the garden plot is completely cleared within 2 weeks (14 consecutive days) of notice.

**Rule 25** - Community Garden gates are to be closed at all times. The last gardener leaving the gardens when no other gardeners are present is responsible for locking the gate as they leave.

**Rule 26** - The premises shall be used solely for gardening purposes, and no structures or other permanent improvements shall be constructed.

**Rule 27** - The City of Orange Community Garden is a drug, tobacco, and alcohol free area. Smoking is not allowed in the garden. The growth of illegal narcotics and marijuana are strictly prohibited.

**Rule 28** - If assigned a plot bordering the perimeter of the Community Gardens, it is understood that there must be a two-foot clearance from your plot and the perimeter fence/wall.

**Rule 29** - Maintain your half of the path around your plot regularly. Paths must be kept free of rocks, weeds, and all obstacles, including encroaching or overhanging plants (e.g., raspberries), compost bins, and structures. The CGOC or City reserves the right to remove materials obstructing any public path at any time.

**Rule 30** - SERVICE COMMITMENT. The City of Orange Community Gardens has been allowed to continue due to the hard work and commitment of dedicated volunteers. The long term viability of the garden depends on all of the gardeners pitching in to do their part.

Therefore, each gardener must serve in the following ways in order to have the privilege of using the public property at the Gardens: (1) perform 4 hours minimum in service to the garden during the year. Service projects and clean up days will be scheduled throughout the year and will be announced via email. It is each gardeners' responsibility to attend service days throughout the year and sign-in to account for service hours worked. Failure to perform the four-hour minimum will result in the forfeiture of the garden plot. The four hours can be split-up between multiple workdays. (2) Serve on one of the Garden Committees (Accountability, Maintenance, or Oversight). (3) Attend the annual Mandatory Garden Meeting held in February of each year.

**2021 SCHEDULED WORK DAYS**

Saturday, February 6, 2021	8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. (annual mandatory meeting)
Saturday, April 10, 2021	8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Sunday, June 6, 2021	8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Sunday, August 8, 2021	8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Sunday, October 17, 2021	8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

**Rule 31** - Gardeners must first get the permission of the chairpersons prior to using any pest or rodent control spray or substance that is non-organic and would have the ability to damage other gardener's crops.

**Rule 32** - Gardeners are to address all questions, issues, concerns, safety related items, etc. to the chairpersons who will work with the City to come to the necessary resolution. The contact information for the chairpersons will be posted in the kiosk at the garden, at all times.

**Rule 33** - The Community Maintenance and Repair Fund will be utilized to make necessary repairs and improvements as agreed upon by the City and Oversight Committee for items such as irrigation, perimeter fencing, rodent control, replacement equipment for common use etc. All repairs must be approved by the City of Orange Parks Division Manager prior to the commencement of work. If the maintenance and repair fund has been depleted prior to the end of the calendar year, repairs may have to wait until replacement funds are collected.

**Rule 34** – If a gardener has an item to be discarded that another gardener could use, they should notify the co-chairs instead of placing the item in the common area. They will inform gardeners of item availability and ask interested gardeners to individually contact that person. This will help to keep the common area neat.

**Rule 35** – Gardeners may request to add a co-gardener to their lease agreement by emailing the City of Orange. The co-gardener must be an Orange resident through the duration of the lease. The co-gardener must agree to comply with all the rules and regulations. Co-gardeners are not required to fulfill the service hour requirement or serve on a committee. Existing gardeners with two plots, will not be allowed to sign-on as a co-gardener on another plot at the Orange Community Gardens.