



Rules & Regulations

Governing Public Cemeteries

In The City of Taunton



Adopted by

Parks, Cemeteries & Public Grounds Commission

**PARKS, CEMETERIES & PUBLIC GROUNDS DEPARTMENT
CITY OF TAUNTON**

MAYOR SHAUNNA O'CONNELL

Andrew J Marshall, Commissioner

OFFICE

170 Harris Street
Taunton, MA 02780
Phone: 508-821-1415
Fax: 508-821-1065
Email: Taunton-Cemeteries@taunton-ma.gov

Office Hours:

Monday, Wednesday & Thursdays	7:30 AM to 4:00 PM
Tuesday	7:30 AM to 7:00 PM
Friday	7:30 AM to Noon

Cemetery Hours

Sunrise to Sunset

Parks, Cemeteries & Public Grounds Commission

Lawrence E. Newman, Chairman

Robert Casey

Brian Friary

James Moran

Dyann Nunes

**PARKS, CEMETERIES & PUBLIC GROUNDS DEPARTMENT
CITY OF TAUNTON**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	General Supervision	Page 4
II.	Interments and Disinterment	Page 4-5
III.	Control of Work by Department	Page 6
IV.	Roadway and Replatting	Page 6
V.	Conduct of Persons within Cemetery	Page 7
VI.	Perpetual Care / Lot Endowments	Page 7-8
VII.	Lot Purchases	Page 8-9
VIII.	Rules for Monuments, Markers and Foundations	Page 9-10
IX.	Shrubs, Flowers/Decorations	Page 12-13
X.	Disclaimer of Liability	Page 13-14
XI.	Reduced Rate Burials	Page 14
XII.	Animals in Cemeteries	Page 14

**PARKS, CEMETERIES & PUBLIC GROUNDS DEPARTMENT
CITY OF TAUNTON**

RULES AND REGULATIONS

For the mutual protection of every lot purchaser, these rules and regulations are hereby adopted as the rules and regulations of the Parks, Cemeteries and Public Grounds Department of the City of Taunton for all property owners and visitors within the Cemetery.

All lots sold shall be subject to said rules and regulations, and subject, further, to such other rules and regulations, amendments or alterations as shall be adopted by the Parks, Cemeteries & Public Grounds Department from time to time without notice. The reference to these rules and regulations in the certificate of ownership to lots shall have the same force and effect as if set forth in full therein.

I. GENERAL SUPERVISION OF CEMETERIES

- A. **COMMISSIONER** shall have general supervision of all Cemeteries and persons working for the Parks, Cemeteries & Public Grounds Department under control of the Parks, Cemeteries & Public Grounds Commission.
- B. **COMMISSIONER**, or his designees, shall have full charge of funerals in all city-owned cemeteries.
- C. **COMMISSIONER** is hereby empowered to enforce all rules and regulations, and shall have charge of grounds and buildings, and at all times shall have supervision and control of all persons in Cemetery, including the conduct of funerals, traffic and employees.

II. INTERMENTS & DISINTERMENTS

- A. **SUBJECT TO LAWS**. Besides being subject to these rules and regulations, all interments, dis-interments and removals are made subject to the orders and laws of the properly constituted authorities of the City, County and State.
- B. **TIME AND CHARGES**. All interments, disinterments and removals must be made at the time and in the manner and upon such charges as fixed by the Parks, Cemeteries & Public Grounds Commission.
- C. **NO INTERMENTS SUNDAYS**. Interments, disinterments or removals shall not be permitted on Sunday. The receiving tomb may be used in cases of emergency.

- D. **NOTICE.** The Parks, Cemeteries & Public Grounds Commission reserves the right to insist upon at least twenty-four hours notice prior to any interment, and at least one week's notice prior to any disinterment or removal.
- E. **AUTHORIZATION OF ONE LOT OWNER SUFFICIENT.** The Parks, Cemeteries & Public Grounds Department reserves the right to make an interment of any member of the immediate family of any one of several lot owners upon his/her written authorization. No other person may be interred without the written consent of all those owners of the lot.
- F. **LOCATION OF INTERMENT SPACE.** When instructions regarding the location of an interment space in a lot cannot be obtained, or are indefinite or when for any reason the interment space cannot be opened where specified, the Commissioner may, in his/her discretion, open it in such location in the lot as he/she deems best and proper, so as not to delay the funeral, and the Department shall not be liable in damages for any error so made.
- G. **ORDERS GIVEN BY TELEPHONE.** The Parks, Cemeteries & Public Grounds Department shall not be held responsible for any order given by telephone, fax or email for any mistake occurring from the want of precise and proper instructions as to the particular space, size and location in the lot where interment is desired.
- H. **ERRORS MAY BE CORRECTED.** The Parks, Cemeteries & Public Grounds Department reserves, and shall have, the right to correct any error that may be made either in making interment, disinterment, or removals, or in the description, transfer or conveyance of any interment property, either by canceling such conveyance and substituting and conveying in lieu thereof other interment property of equal value and similar location as far as possible, or as may be selected by the Commissioner, or in the sole discretion of the Parks, Cemeteries & Public Grounds Commission, by refunding the amount of money paid on account of said purchase. In the event such error shall involve the interment of the remains of any person in such property, the Parks, Cemeteries & Public Grounds Department reserves, and shall have the right to remove and to transfer such remains so interred to such other property of equal value and similar location as may be substituted and conveyed in lieu thereof.
- I. **DELAYS IN INTERMENT CAUSED BY PROTESTS.** The Parks, Cemeteries & Public Grounds Department shall be in no way liable for any delay in the interment of a body where a protest to the interment has been made, or where the rules and regulations have not been complied with; and, further, said Parks, Cemeteries & Public Grounds Department reserves the right, under such circumstances to place the body in the receiving vault until the full rights have been determined.
- J. **CASKETS NOT TO BE DISTURBED.** Once a casket containing a body is within the confines of the Cemetery, no Funeral Director, or his embalmer, assistant, employee or agent, shall be permitted to open the casket or to touch the body without the consent of the legal representative of the deceased.

- K. **INTERMENT OF MORE THAN ONE BODY.** No more than one body, or the remains of one body, shall be interred in one grave.
- L. **CREMATION BURIAL IN FULL GRAVE.** No more than three cremated remains may be buried in any grave already occupied, space permitting. All cremation burials must be in a durable/retrievable container. All durable/retrievable containers shall be interred within a concrete vault.
- M. **MAY OBTAIN LARGER LOT.** A body or cremated remains may be removed from its original lot with proper documentation, to a larger or better lot in a City Owned Cemetery or another Cemetery when there has been an exchange or purchase for that purpose.
- N. **DEPARTMENT'S EQUIPMENT MUST BE USED.** Artificial grass, lowering devices and other equipment owned by the Parks, Cemeteries & Public Grounds Department should be used exclusively in making interments, dis-interments and removals. Private arrangements made by the Funeral Director with a vault company will be allowed based on current fee schedule.
- O. **CARE IN REMOVAL.** The Parks, Cemeteries & Public Grounds Department shall exercise the utmost care in making a removal, but it shall assume no liability for damage to any casket or burial case or urn incurred in making the removal.

III. CONTROL OF WORK BY DEPARTMENT

- A. **WORK TO BE DONE BY PARKS, CEMETERIES & PUBLIC GROUNDS DEPARTMENT.** All improvements or alterations of individual property in the Cemetery shall be under the direction of and subject to the consent, satisfaction and approval of the Commissioner. All workmen in any capacity within the confines of the Cemetery are subject to the direction of the Commissioner.

IV. ROADWAY AND REPLATting

- A. **THE RIGHT TO REPLAT, REGRADE AND USE OF PROPERTY.** The right to enlarge, reduce, replat or change the boundaries or grading of the Cemetery or of a section or sections from time to time, including the right to modify or change the locations of, or remove or regrade roads, drives and walks, or any part thereof, is hereby expressly reserved. The right to lay, maintain and operate or alter or change pipe lines, gutters, or drainage, etc. is also expressly reserved, as well as the right to use cemetery property, not sold to individual lot owners, for cemetery purposes or for anything necessary, incidental or convenient thereto. The Parks, Cemeteries & Public Grounds Department reserves to itself and to those lawfully entitled thereto, a perpetual right of ingress and egress over lots for the purpose of passage to and from other lots.

V. CONDUCT OF PERSONS WITHIN THE CEMETERY

- A. **MUST USE WALKS.** Persons within the Cemetery grounds shall use only the avenues, walks, and roads, and any person injured while walking on the grass, except that be the only way to reach his lot, or while on any portion of the Cemetery other than the avenues, walks, or roads shall in no way hold the Parks, Cemeteries & Public Grounds Department liable for any injuries sustained.
- B. **FLOWERS, ETC.** All persons are prohibited from gathering flowers, either wild or cultivated, or breaking trees, shrubbery or plants, or disturbing the birds or other animal life.
- C. **LOUNGING ON GROUNDS.** Strangers shall not be permitted to sit or to lounge on any of the grounds, graves or monuments in the Cemetery or in any of the buildings.
- D. **LOUD TALKING.** No loud talking shall be permitted on the Cemetery Grounds within hearing distance of funeral services.
- E. **AUTOMOBILES.** Automobiles shall not be driven through the grounds at a greater speed than 15 miles per hour. Automobiles are not allowed to park or come to a full stop in front of an open grave unless such automobiles are in attendance at the funeral.
- F. **NOTICES AND ADVERTISEMENTS.** No sign or notice or advertisement of any kind shall be allowed in the Cemetery unless placed by the Commissioner.
- G. **NO DOGS ALLOWED.** Per city ordinance, “No person owning or keeping a dog shall permit it to defecate or urinate within the boundaries of any municipally owned playground, park or open space to which the public has access, unless expressly permitted in specially designated areas.” **Chapter 191 ANIMALS**

VI. PERPETUAL CARE / LOT ENDOWMENT

- A. **PERPETUAL CARE / ENDOWMENT OF LOTS.** The term “perpetual care/ endowment”, used in reference to lots, shall be held to mean the cutting of the grass upon said lots at reasonable intervals, the raking and cleaning of the lots, meaning and intending the general preservation of the lots, and the grounds, to the end that said grounds shall remain and be reasonably cared for as Cemetery grounds forever.
- B. **PERPETUAL CARE / ENDOWMENT EXCEPTIONS.** The term “perpetual care/ endowment” shall in no case be construed as meaning the maintenance, repair or replacement of any grave stones or monumental structures or memorials placed or erected on lots, nor the planting of flowers or ornamental plants, nor the maintenance or doing of any special or unusual work in the Cemetery.

- C. **PARKS, CEMETERIES & PUBLIC GROUNDS COMMISSION TO DIRECT EXPENDITURES.** The income from the perpetual care fund shall be expended by the Board of Parks, Cemeteries & Public Grounds Commissioners in such manner as will, in its judgment, be most advantageous to the property owners as a whole, and in accordance with the purposes and provisions of the laws of the State applicable to the expenditure of such funds.
- D. **EXPENDITURE LIMITED TO INCOME.** Perpetual care, whether applied to lots, graves, or to any space within the confines of the Cemetery, shall be limited absolutely to the income received from the investment of the perpetual care fund-no part of the principal being expended-anything herein stated to the contrary notwithstanding.
- E. **RECORD OF DEPOSITS.** The records of the Parks, Cemeteries & Public Grounds Department, and the receipt issued by the City Treasurer with whom such funds have been deposited, shall show the amount of perpetual care fund that has been required of the individual and set aside in each case.

VII. LOT PURCHASE

The Parks, Cemeteries and Public Grounds Department will offer lot purchases for both Immediate Need as well as Pre Need. Lots will be sold in the following denominations.

1. Single Grave
2. 2 Grave Lot
3. 4 Grave Lot
4. 8 Grave Lot

Lot Purchases are limited to no more than (1) eight grave lot per household/individual family.

See rule VIII. Rules for Monuments, Markers and Foundations when considering your lot selections

- A. **IMMEDIATE NEED LOT PURCHASES.** are lots that are purchased at the time of a death. *The next available lot size requested will be sold.*
- B. **PRENEED LOT PURCHASES.** The Parks, Cemetery and Public Grounds Department offers lot sales on a preneed basis. Should one wish to purchase a cemetery lot on a preneed basis, they will be guided to purchase the desired size lot within a specific designated section directed by the cemetery department. Lots will be sold in the order listed below. New Sections will not become available until all lots are sold in the previous section.

Single Graves

Mayflower Hill Cemetery – Section 35 – Next Available

2 Grave Lots

1. Mayflower Hill Cemetery – Section 34 – Lots 278-363
2. Mayflower Hill Cemetery – Section 36 – Lots: 1-73
3. Mayflower Hill Cemetery – Section 36 – Lots: 74-147
4. Mayflower Hill Cemetery – Section 36 – Lots 148-213
5. Mayflower Hill Cemetery – Section 36 – Lots 214-267
6. Mayflower Hill Cemetery – Section 36 – Lots 268-292
7. Mayflower Hill Cemetery – Section 37 – Lots 1-57
8. Mayflower Hill Cemetery – Section 37 – Lots 58-134
9. Mayflower Hill Cemetery – Section 37 – Lots 135-218
10. Mayflower Hill Cemetery – Section 37 – Lots 219-306
11. Mayflower Hill Cemetery – Section 37 – Lots 307-397
12. Mayflower Hill Cemetery – Section 37 – Lots 398-482
13. Mayflower Hill Cemetery – Section 37 – Lots 483-559
14. Mayflower Hill Cemetery – Section 37 – Lots 560-624
15. Mayflower Hill Cemetery – Section 37 – Lots 625-671

4 Grave Lots

1. Mayflower Hill Cemetery – Section 38 – Lots 1-20
2. Mayflower Hill Cemetery – Section 38 – Lots 21-40
3. Mayflower Hill Cemetery – Section 38 – Lots 41-60
4. Mayflower Hill Cemetery – Section 38 - Lots 61-84

8 Grave Lots

1. Mayflower Hill Cemetery – Section 39 – Lots 1-14
2. Mayflower Hill Cemetery – Section 39 – Lots 43-55

VIII. RULES FOR MONUMENTS MARKERS & FOUNDATIONS

Monuments and Markers are to be considered private property, therefore all costs, care, and maintenance shall be the sole responsibility of the lot owner.

The Parks, Cemeteries & Public Grounds Department, shall install all monument foundations and markers. The charges for such foundations shall be reasonable and uniform.

A. MONUMENTS / HEAD STONES

- a. No monument or other memorial may be brought into the Cemetery, until a sketch or blueprint, showing the design, material, finish size and proposed inscription thereon, is first submitted to the Commissioner or designated representative for approval. The Commissioner and Commission reserves the right to reject any plan or design for a memorial which on account of size, design, inscription, finish or quality of stone is unsuited to the lot on which it is to be placed.
- b. Only one central or family memorial shall be allowed on a family lot.
- c. Monuments must be of natural stone. No artificial material of any description is permitted. All die stones shall be finished at least on front and back.
- d. The size of monument is to be governed by the size of the lot.

Monument / Headstone Dimensions

2-Grave Lot	Minimum 2' x 1 up to 3' x 1'	36" in height from the foundation
4-Grave Lot	Minimum 2' x 1 up to 3' x 1'	36" in height from the foundation
8-Grave Lot	Minimum 2' x 1 up to 5' x 1'	42" in height from the foundation

B. FLAT MARKERS

- a. Markers must be of natural stone. No artificial material of any description is permitted.
- b. Markers must be flat and even with sod except in such cases where markers above ground are already on lots.
- c. Markers must be the following dimensions 2' x 1' 4" thick.
- d. Only ONE flat marker is allowed per grave.
 - i. Example 1: A single grave is allowed a full burial, and three cremation burials. Therefore, Grave 1 is allowed one marker with 4 names to be placed at the foot of Grave 1. Up Right Monuments are prohibited in single grave lot sections.
 - ii. Example 2: A lot containing 2 graves is allowed one flat marker per grave for a total of 2 flat markers, to be installed at the foot of each grave; and with the allowable maximum of 4 interments per grave (1 full burial and 3 cremations), the lot is allowed 2 markers with 4 names per marker.

- iii. Example 3: A lot containing 4 graves is allowed one flat marker per grave for a total of 4 flat markers, to be installed at the foot of each grave; and with the allowable maximum of 4 interments per grave (1 full burial and 3 cremations), the lot is allowed 4 markers with 4 names per marker.
- e. Exceptions: Veterans are allowed their own VA markers, either bronze or granite in addition to a flat marker.
 - i. Example 1: A single lot has 4 interred veterans (1 full burial and 3 cremations), Grave 1 is allowed 5 flat markers; 4 Veterans markers and 1 regular marker at the foot of the grave with all 4 names on the stone.
 - ii. Example 2: Interred in a 2-grave lot are 8 veterans (2 full burials and 6 cremations). The lot is allowed one flat marker per grave for a total of 2 flat markers, to be installed at the foot of each grave; and, with the allowable maximum of 4 interments per grave, the lot is allowed and additional 8 veterans markers, 4 for each grave for a total of 10 markers.

C. FOUNDATIONS.

- a. Foundation orders received after May 1 cannot be guaranteed for Memorial Day. No foundation will be set between May 15 to May 31, nor between November 1 and April 1. No work will be set up in the spring until the ground is fully settled and in proper condition. No work may be brought to the Cemetery on a weekend or the day before a holiday.
- b. The Parks, Cemeteries & Public Grounds Department shall assume responsibility for the proper construction of such foundations. Foundations for all monuments shall be built at least to the depth of the grave. Five days will be required after receipt of order for the construction of foundations for monuments or markers.

MONUMENT INSTALLATION

Monument dealers should familiarize themselves with the regulations for they are expected to conform to all rules as stated.

D. **PERSONS** engaged in erecting monuments and other structures, are prohibited from attaching ropes to monuments, trees and shrubs, or from scattering their material over adjoining lots, or from blocking avenues or walks, or from leaving their material on the grounds longer than is absolutely necessary.

- They must do as little injury to the grass, trees and shrubs as possible, and must remove all debris and restore the grounds and sod to its original condition.
- No material, machinery, or other things for the construction of monuments, or monuments themselves, may be brought into the Cemetery until required for immediate use; nor, under any circumstances, when a funeral is in process; nor

between Saturday noon and Monday morning; and no work shall be done during said time, without special permission from the Commissioner.

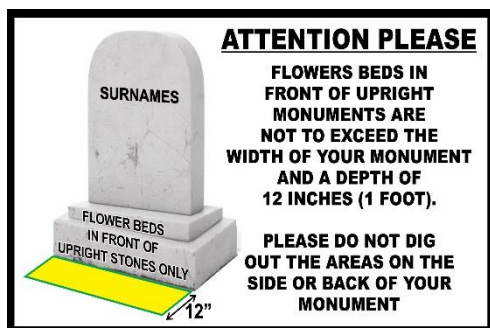
- While a funeral or interment is being conducted nearby all work of any description shall cease.
- No lot owner shall erect or place, or cause to be erected or placed on any lot in the Cemetery, any memorial in respect of which the Parks, Cemeteries & Public Grounds Commissioner disapproves.
- While the Parks, Cemeteries & Public Grounds Department will exercise all possible care to protect raised lettering, carving or ornaments on any memorial, or other structure, on any lot, it disclaims responsibility for any damage or injury thereto.

IX. SHRUBS, FLOWERS/DECORATIONS

As of January 1, 2005 the Parks, Cemeteries & Public Grounds Department will no longer allow the planting of shrubs or trees around monuments. Those monuments before this date will be allowed to continue as long as the family maintains the plantings. At the discretion of the Commissioner or his/her designee, if a planting encroaches on another lot, it will be removed without notice.

The Cemetery reserves to itself the entire control of every tree, shrub, vine or plant growing within its boundaries, including the right of removal without notice when it considers such removal advisable. All persons are forbidden to gather flowers or to break or injure any tree, shrub, vine or plant. The Commissioner or its designated representative may remove from lots anything objectionable or injurious to the uses and purposes of the Cemetery or contrary to the rules and regulations.

- A. **FLOWERBEDS.** Lot owners shall have the opportunity to plant a flowerbed and it shall be the responsibility of the lot owner or family member to maintain. Plantings, where permitted, shall be at the owner's expense. All plantings are subject to the approval and supervision of the Commissioner or designated representative.



- a. Flowerbeds may not exceed the length of the monument nor one foot in width (12" inches) and must be maintained in weed-free condition at all times by the lot owner. Flowerbeds are not allowed on any single grave lot. Unsightly beds may be removed at any time at the discretion of the Commissioner or its authorized representative. A fee will be charged for such removal.

- b. Annual flowers (geraniums, marigolds, petunias, etc....) are allowed for planting at grade and they must not exceed 12” from the stone. The raising or lowering of planting beds is not allowed.
 - c. No settees, urn, votive candle, ironwork, fencing, curb enclosures, flower pots, statutes, decorative flags of any type, or any other type of decoration shall be allowed around any monument or single grave lot.
 - d. The Cemetery will not be responsible for anything placed or left on the lots by the owners. When the owners perform work on lots, they must remove all rubbish and excavated earth from the cemetery grounds.
 - e. Natural flowers (annuals or perennials) may be planted within the allowed flower bed from April 1st until October 31st. Artificial flowers may be planted within the allowed flower bed from November 1st until March 31st.
 - f. Holiday decorations, baskets, flower containers, wreaths and such will be allowed one week prior to a holiday and be removed one week following a holiday.
 - g. Artificial flowers, baskets, wreaths, sprays etc..., are permitted from November 1 through March 31 ONLY.
 - h. No Flowerbed or decoration will be allowed on a single grave lot during the period of April 1st to October 31st. Flower containers will be allowed the week before Memorial Day and the week after Memorial Day only. November 1st to March 31st Holiday decorations, baskets, flower containers, wreaths and such will be allowed one week prior to a holiday and be removed one week following a holiday.
 - i. No curbing, fencing, hedging, grave mounds, or enclosures of any kind shall be allowed around any lot. The Parks, Cemeteries & Public Grounds Commission reserves the right to remove the same if so erected, planted or placed.
- B. The disposal of refuse of any type is strictly forbidden on cemetery grounds.

X. DISCLAIMER OR LIABILITY

- A. **LIABILITY.** The City of Taunton disclaims all responsibility for loss or damage to any lot, monument, memorial or planting from causes beyond its reasonable control, especially from loss or damage caused by an act of God, the elements, earthquake, war, common enemy, air raid, invasion, insurrection, riot, order or any military or civil authority, thieves, VANDALS, strikers, malicious mischief makers, explosions, unavoidable accidents or any cause, similar of dissimilar, beyond the control of the Cemetery whether the loss or damage be direct or related.

B. **EXCEPTIONS AND MODIFICATIONS.** Special cases may arise in which the literal enforcement of a rule may impose unnecessary hardship. The Parks, Cemeteries & Public Grounds Department, therefore, reserves the right, without notice, to make exceptions, suspensions or modifications in any of these rules and regulations when in its judgment, the same appear advisable, and such temporary exceptions, suspensions or modifications shall in no way be construed as affecting the general application of such rule.

C. **AMENDMENTS.** The Parks, Cemeteries & Public Grounds Department may and it hereby expressly reserves the right, at any time or times, to adopt new rules and regulations, or to amend, alter or repeal any rule, regulations or article, section, paragraph, or sentence in these rules and regulations.

Addendum: As adopted by Commission (2009)

XI. Reduced Rate Burials/Assisted Burials

Before a marker is placed on any grave that is not deeded to the individual or family, or when any individual or family receives a reduced rate burial fee (Assisted Burial) and does not have the Deeded Right of Burial, they must first pay for a single grave lot.

A marker may only be placed on a single grave if the current single lot fee is paid in full. All fees must be paid for by certified check or money order.

XII. Animals Prohibited

It is unlawful for any person to take a dog into city cemetery grounds, or to allow or permit any dog in such person's care or custody to remain within the limits of the city cemetery grounds, with the exception of guide and companion dogs assisting the disabled.

If you have any questions about a rule, please call the Parks, Cemeteries & Public Grounds Office at 508-821-1415 or you may E-Mail: taunton-cemeteries@taunton-ma.gov or visit the City of Taunton Website at:

<https://www.taunton-ma.gov/parks-cemeteries-public-grounds>

Adopted 1942

Amended 1979, 2005, 2009, 2018

Revised and Amended 2023

**PARKS, CEMETERIES & PUBLIC GROUNDS DEPARTMENT
CITY OF TAUNTON**

APPENDIX – Fees

**SCHEDULE OF CHARGES
PRICES SUBJECT TO YEARLY REVIEW
Current Prices can be found on the City of Taunton Web Site**

<https://www.taunton-ma.gov/670/Lot-Purchases-Cemetery-Fees>