



## COMMUNITY GARDEN RULES AND AGREEMENTS

### General Contact Information:

City Hall: Monday – Thursday, between 8:00am to 4:30pm  
(714) 754-5300  
[CMgardens@costamesaca.gov](mailto:CMgardens@costamesaca.gov)

### Garden Locations and Hours

Del Mar 170 Del Mar Avenue  
Hamilton 532 Hamilton Avenue

### Garden Hours

*Monday - Saturday, 8:00 a.m. to dusk; Sunday, 9:00 a.m. to dusk.  
Motorized equipment cannot be used before 9:00 a.m. on Saturday and 11:00 a.m. on Sunday.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The City of Costa Mesa has established an area for a Community Garden on property owned by the City at the addresses noted above. The Community Garden will be divided into parcels in an area of approximately 13 feet by 15 feet. Gardeners entering into this agreement are subject to the terms and conditions herein contained. Violation of this agreement and/or Community Garden Rules shall be grounds for termination of privileges afforded to the Gardener by this Agreement.

## II. GARDEN PURPOSE

The Community Garden Program has been developed to provide gardeners the opportunity to actively grow food, flowers, and plants for personal enjoyment.

## III. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

A. To become a member and maintain membership, you must:

1. Maintain *current* residency of the City of Costa Mesa. Business addresses and post office boxes are not accepted. Proof of residency must be provided at the time of application and upon annual renewal. Acceptable forms of verification are:
  - i. California driver's license, California identification card, AND
  - ii. A current utility bill (within 60 days of application or renewal) with a Costa Mesa address. Acceptable utility bills include: gas, water, electricity, or refuse.
2. Sign a Community Garden Agreement and abide by the current Rules and Agreements of the Costa Mesa Community Gardens.
3. Be assigned a parcel and actively garden the parcel (refer to sections IV, V, VI).
4. Perform a minimum of four (4) hours of community service at the Community Gardens annually (refer to section VII).
5. Remain current with dues and fees (refer to section XIII).

B. Special Notes Regarding Membership

1. Parcels will be assigned by Parks and Community Services Department staff.
2. There is a limit of one (1) garden parcel per Costa Mesa household address per person.
3. The City may assign parcels to community/charitable organizations as appropriate.



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4. Gardeners are not permitted to sell, transfer, or sublet their assigned parcel to another person.
5. Each member shall keep the City notified of his/her most current contact information, including address, telephone number, and email address. Any correspondence mailed or emailed to the members' address on file (physical or email) is considered delivered. Gardeners that move outside Costa Mesa may not renew the following renewal period, forfeiting their parcel.
6. Upon the death of a member, the spouse or partner at the same address only (no exceptions) may take over the parcel and becomes a member in their own right.

### IV. MEMBER CODE CONDUCT

#### A. Members shall:

1. Abide by all hours of operation. Garden Hours: Monday - Saturday, 8:00 a.m. to dusk; Sunday, 9:00 a.m. to dusk. Motorized equipment cannot be used before 9:00 a.m. on Saturday and 11:00 a.m. on Sunday.
2. Read email and mail correspondence for current information.
3. Supervise children and stay with them at all times.
4. Use community garden equipment with care, and return clean, and wheelbarrows empty.
5. Conserve water at all times.
  - i. Stay with the hose while watering.
  - ii. Must be done by hand using ONLY nozzles with automatic shut-off.
  - iii. All watering must be contained within the parcel boundary, with no overflow.
  - iv. Ensure water is turned off before leaving.
  - v. Report problems with water and hoses to the City immediately by calling P&CS at (714) 754-5300 during normal business hours, or during evenings and weekends, the Costa Mesa Police Department non-emergency line at (714) 754-5252.
6. Be allowed, with prior approval from Parks and Community Services staff, to bring private vehicles to load/unload supplies or equipment in the common area only and only for the time needed to load/unload.

#### B. Members shall not:

1. Sell or use garden produce for profit.
2. Bring vehicles into the aisles at any time.
3. Bring animals into the garden, including animals on leashes.
4. Allow children or guests to wander into neighbors' gardens or common areas.
5. Enter another member's garden without explicit written permission. Removal of any item (crop, plant, tool, etc.) that is not yours is considered theft and cause for permanent loss of membership. The City is not responsible for the theft of crops, tools, or personal belongings.
6. Destroy or damage any other member's property or property of the Community Garden.
7. Consume alcoholic beverages or smoke in the garden.
8. Loiter in the garden after dusk.



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### V. GARDEN PARCEL REQUIREMENTS

#### A. Members shall:

1. Keep garden parcel completely planted and harvested with new vegetables of the season (volunteer plants and cover crops are not allowed); do not allow crops to go to rot.
2. Plant at least 80 % of their parcel with edible crops (up to 10% beneficial flowers). The other 20% may include:
  - i. Pathways;
  - ii. one plastic storage container;
  - iii. two made-for-garden plastic or composite garden chairs or one small bench;
  - iv. two approved composting containers (refer to section X).  
NOTE: if an item such as a trellis is used to support a growing crop it is considered part of a planted crop. If not in use it will be counted as part of your 20% unplanted parcel.
3. Keep their parcel in a clean, neat and weed free condition at all times. To avoid the spread of disease, take reasonable steps to prevent and control disease and pests by
  - i. Removing weeds and grasses by hand;
  - ii. Trimming or removing diseased and/or pest-infested plants.
4. Be allowed to use neutral fertilizers only. Packaged soil amendments must be labeled as organic and/or must not list any synthetic ingredients. No chemical products allowed.
5. Keep all personal items such as: gardening materials, plants, pots, supplies, tools, bins, branches, vines, etc. within the parcel boundary at all times.
6. Keep parcel boundaries and pathways at their original placement and width.
  - i. Garden parcels are limited to approximately 13' x 15' boundaries; the City shall, at City convenience, re-stake and verify parcel boundaries as needed.
7. Keep boarder boards visible at all times and free of soil, chips, and plants; keeping parcel markers clear and readable as well.
8. Maintain the north and east aisle way surrounding their parcel and keep them in a clean, neat and weed free condition. Please see City staff for a detailed map of your designated area of responsibility.
  - i. Keep all aisles free and clear of all objects including tools, pots, and plants.
  - ii. Must trim any plants whose growth extends out of the parcel boundary and extends into the aisle way.
9. Place refuse in dumpsters provided. Any materials larger than container must be cut down to fit inside dumpster.
10. Arrange for someone to care for your parcel when necessary (i.e., during vacation or illness). The City is not responsible for maintaining any member's assigned parcel.

#### B. Members shall not:

1. Extend their garden or encroach into the common area or into another parcel.
2. Leave their parcel unkempt; parcels not actively gardened for thirty (30) days will be reassigned.
3. Use any type of chemical product on any parcel including:
  - i. Synthetic pesticides, fungicides, and fertilizers
  - ii. Herbicides
4. Keep all items, including trees, plants, trellis, and archways, in the parcel shorter than six (6) feet in height.



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- 5. Allow any plant or item to cast shade onto any other parcel. If any item does cast shade or impact another parcel in any way, the Parks and Community Services staff will ask the gardener of the shade-casting item to trim and/or adjust the heights or take other necessary measures to eliminate the impact on the other parcel.
- 6. Place any item, plant or grow any seed, plant, shrub, tree, or vine on or near the garden fencing or common areas without the City’s permission.

**VI. EQUIPMENT AND SPECIFIC PLANT RULES**

A. Members are allowed to:

- 1. Build or use frames constructed of simple stakes, string, or prefabricated lightweight wire frames available at nurseries;
- 2. Store one (1) storage container within their parcel for tools and supplies and must be designed for outdoor use, weather resistant, and be no taller than 3.5 feet.

B. Members are not allowed to:

- 1. Build or use trellises and plant supports taller than six (6) feet tall; trellises or supports creating too much shade on neighboring parcels will need to be removed.
- 2. Bring or use household items such as baby gates, tires, bookcases, shelves, construction material, screen doors, mailboxes or other similar items.

C. Seasonal rule: To help control diseases that can persist from overwintering plants, all tomatoes, peppers, and eggplants must be removed from all parcels before December 1 and are not to be planted until after March 1.

D. Plants and vegetables that are invasive, toxic, have the potential for spreading plant diseases, harboring damaging insects, or causing physical harm are NOT ALLOWED for use in the Costa Mesa Community Garden. These plants include but are not limited to:

Bamboo	Datura	Passion Fruit	Mint
Cactus/Succulents*	Four O’Clock	Petunia	Morning Glory
Castor Oil Plant	Horseradish	Plumeria*	Sugar Cane
Calendula	Illegal Plants	Potato*	Trees*
Dandelion	Poisonous Nightshade	Roses*	Volunteer Tomatoes
Datura	Citrus**		

\*Cactus, succulents, roses, potatoes, plumeria, and trees that were planted in a garden parcel prior to 2015 will be grandfathered in and removed as members leave the garden. The City may require removal of any of these grandfathered plants in the event that they are not properly maintained.

\*\*A plant disease (Huanglongbing or citrus greening) that kills citrus trees has been found in California. Our gardens are located inside an HLB (Huanglongbing or citrus greening) quarantine area. As result, the transport or growth of any citrus plant is regulated to prevent the spread of this disease.

**VII. COMMUNITY SERVICE**

- A. Community service work parties are scheduled throughout the year to help maintain the common areas of the community gardens.
- B. Each member (parcel) must attend two (2) work parties per year per parcel, giving at least four (4) hours of service to the common areas.
  - 1. Hours are prorated if joining after July 1 each year, those members (parcels) will be required to give two (2) hours of community service to the common areas.



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### C. Community service work parties will:

1. Be scheduled at least four (4) times per year and will be posted on the bulletin boards, online, and via email at least three (3) weeks in advance.
2. Be scheduled on various days of the week for two (2) hours.
3. Check-in will begin 15 minutes before the two hours begins. Members must stay the entire two hours to earn credit for service. At the end of two hours, members will be provided with a receipt of service.
4. No one under the age of 18 may be present during or working during work parties unless directly supervised by their parent or guardian throughout the event.
5. No personal gardening is allowed during work parties.
6. Members will be required to wear closed-toed shoes, gloves, and appropriate clothing during work parties.
7. Community service must be completed on or before the final work party of the year which will usually be held at the beginning of December each year, time and weather permitting. There will be no carry over from year(s) prior, and there will be no grace period or waiver allotted for any members.

### VIII. GARDEN INSPECTIONS

- A. A garden inspection will be conducted by City staff periodically to identify any parcels out of compliance with the Community Garden Rules and Agreements.
- B. Parcels that are not compliant shall receive notification via email or US Postal Service if email is not available of non-compliance. Notice may be a correction notice, or notice of termination (due to repeated correction notices).
  - i. Correction notices will allow for two (2) weeks for correction from the date of the notice, at which point a correction inspection will take place.
  - ii. Termination notices (see section XII) will be emailed or mailed to members.

### IX. HOSE USE AND REPLACEMENT

- A. Maximum length of 50' hoses are allowed.
- B. Hoses must be stored, wound and hung properly on hose hangers without kinks and in concentric rings at all times when not in use.
- C. Report problems with hoses, hose hangers, and water sources to the City immediately.
- D. Hose replacement (purchase and cost) is the responsibility of the gardeners that share a common water source.

### X. COMPOST CONTAINERS AND COMPOSTING

- A. Composting must be done in covered containers. Open composting (in soil) is not permitted.
- B. Members shall not have more than two (2) compost containers per parcel.
- C. All crops in composter must be covered with dirt or manure to deter insects and animals.
- D. Members shall not use meat scraps or weeds in composters.
- E. Compost is considered part of your 20% non-planted area of the parcel.

### XI. COMMON AREAS

- A. Please respect your fellow garden members and surrounding garden neighborhood(s):
  1. No amplified music is allowed in garden.