

Garden Policies and Procedures

Mission:

The City of Mountain View Senior Community Garden is a garden space dedicated for the use of Mountain View senior citizen residents to experience the benefits of gardening and strengthen community bonds. The Senior Community Garden seeks to promote healthy aging through increasing food access, low-impact exercise, and opportunities for social interaction in an outdoor natural setting.

The Senior Community Garden consists of sixty-three plots each assigned to individuals or senior citizens within a single household. The Senior Community Garden open to adults who are at least of the age 55 and Mountain View residents. To sign up for a garden plot, or to be added to the waiting list, please contact the Mountain View Senior Center at 650-903-6330 or senior.center@mountainview.gov.

Within this packet, you will find the policies and procedures governing the garden including:

- 1) Eligibility and Registration
- 2) Community Responsibilities
- 3) Garden Rules and Expectations
- 4) Leaving the Garden
- 5) Emergency Procedures

Eligibility and Registration

- At time of registration (first time or annual), individuals must be at least 55 years of age and Mountain View residents.
- Senior citizens within a household may share one garden plot and be registered as co-gardeners.
- At registration, a) proof of residency, b) a signed liability waiver, and c) annual fee are required. Each year, gardeners must renew their plots in person. Gardeners will be notified in writing of the annual registration renewal period.
- An annual fee is set by City Council and is non-negotiable, non-refundable, and not pro-rated.
- To be added to the waitlist, individuals must meet age and residency eligibility criteria.
- While gardeners may be registered for the waitlist at both the City of Mountain View Community Gardens (Willowgate or Senior Garden), there is a limit of one City of Mountain View Community Garden plot per household.
- When a plot is vacated, current gardeners may request to transfer plots before the plot is made available to those on the waiting list. Requests should be made in writing to the staff liaison.
- Individuals who are at the top of the waitlist, but cannot currently accept a plot, may remain at the top of the waitlist for six months. After six months, individuals must accept the next plot to become available or be moved to the bottom of the waitlist.
- There are no term limits on holding a plot, provided that the gardeners remains in good standing, in relation to the requirements contained within this packet.

Garden Committee and Community Responsibilities

Everyone with a plot in the Senior Community Garden automatically become a member of the "Garden Committee". As such, each gardener is required to participate, on occasion, in various community garden activities.

- All gardeners are required to attend at least one garden meeting one garden community work day each calendar year.
- There will be at least two weeks' notice before a garden meeting.
- To hold a meeting, there must be at least eleven gardeners and a staff liaison present.
- Failure to attend at least one meeting or one garden community work day each calendar year will result in immediate forfeiture of a garden plot.
- An Executive Committee, consisting of at least three gardeners (Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary), will assist the staff liaison in day-to-day enforcement of the garden rules as well as meeting agendas, community work day organization, and social events.
- Anyone wishing to join the Executive Committee should apply to the staff liaison.
- Occasionally, other social events may take place in the garden including potlucks, workshops, etc. Any Senior Community Garden event is open to all gardeners.

Garden Rules and Expectations

General Use

- Use common sense and be a good neighbor to your fellow gardeners!
- Gardens must remain attractive year round. This means that the garden must either be productive and maintained, or, during fallow periods, the garden must be clear of weeds and other debris.
- If you plan to be absent for more than one month, please inform the staff liaison or the Garden Committee chair. Extended absences (more than three consecutive months) will be reviewed by the Executive Committee and staff liaison to determine if the gardener may retain his/her plot.
- Do not remove anything, plants, tools, dirt, or otherwise, from another gardener's plot for any reason without permission. To do so will result in immediate forfeiture of a garden plot.
- If you are the last person to leave the garden, please lock the gate.

Plants

- Any type of legal vegetable or flower may be planted. Any plant that spreads root or rhizomes (including mint, horseradish, and nettle) or other invasive plants must be constrained to a container. No illegal plants.
- Do not allow tall plants or vines to cast substantial shadows on another plot.
- All plants must be contained within the garden frame.
- Nothing is permitted to grow on the fence surrounding the garden.
- Gardeners are responsible for keeping both their gardens and the pathways surrounding their garden plots free from weeds, overgrown plants, and other obstructions.
- All weeds must be removed before they begin to flower.
- Plants with diseases or bug infestations must be treated or removed.

Structures

- Structures in the garden must not cast unwanted shadows on another plot. Please see a "Guide to Building Structures" for more information.
- Personal garden tools or supplies may be kept at the back of garden plots, but they may not take up more space than the width of the plot nor extend more than 1.5 feet past the end of the plot.

Tools

- All tools in the toolshed are for gardeners to share, in the garden. They may not be taken home.
- After watering, turn off hoses completely and replace them on the hose racks.
- Clean all mud and plant debris from tools after using them and replace them neatly in the tool shed.
- All debris in wheelbarrows should be placed in the appropriate bin, and the wheelbarrows should be returned to the area next to the toolshed.
- No garbage or waste vegetation should be left in the garden area. Please use designated trash and yard waste bins.

Guests

- All guests (non-plot holders) must accompany the garden plot holder or staff liaison.
- No pets are permitted in the garden.
- If someone who is not a gardener will be watering a plot in the gardener's absence, they must first contact the staff liaison.

Leaving the Garden

Plots are not transferrable and may only be assigned by the staff liaison.

If a gardener is no longer able or interested in maintaining a garden plot, they should clear all plant materials, structures, etc. from their plot before leaving, out of consideration for the next gardener.

A gardener may be removed from his or her plot if the above rules are violated and corrective action is not taken. Should any of the above rules be violated, the following process will allow the gardener to rectify any problems or be removed from the Senior Community Garden. City of Mountain View staff have the final say on removing individuals from the Senior Community Garden.

Informal notification by Executive Committee or staff liaison.



First written warning, issued by staff liaison.



Second written warning will be issued if the matter has not been resolved within two weeks for the first written warning.



If corrective action has not been completed within the time period designated in the second warning, the garden plot is forfeit.

The following violations may result in immediate forfeiture of the garden.

- Failure to register annually within the time period provided
- Taking items without permission from another gardener's plot
- Failure to attend at least one meeting or one community work day within the period of a year.

Emergency Procedures

- If you or another gardener is injured, call emergency services at 9-1-1.
- Please report leaks or other physical issues with the garden:
 - **During business hours** (Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.):
Contact the staff liaison at the Senior Center, **650-903-6330**.
 - **During non-business hours:** Contact City of Mountain View non-emergency communications at **650-903-6395**.
- For minor injuries, a supply of adhesive bandages is kept in the toolshed.