

City of Orange Community Garden Rules and Regulations

The City of Orange Community Garden (OCG) 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 Garden Plot Lease Agreement with the City of Orange for use of public property at the Orange Community Garden (OCG).

Garden plot renewal begins in early December (usually the first week) and ends before the City’s Holiday Closure in mid-December (usually the third week of the month). The new (Garden) year begins January 1 and expires December 31 of each calendar year. Current gardeners have the option of renewing or canceling their Garden Plot Lease Agreement with the City. Gardeners who choose not to renew their Community Garden Plot Lease Agreement must notify the City and clear their plot(s) by the last day of the year. Lease fees are due for all Gardeners during the renewal period; lease fees are not pro-rated. Unclaimed plots will be reassigned to new gardeners after the December registration. Any Gardener that joins mid-year will still be expected to pay the lease fees and deposit in full when the Garden Plot Lease Agreement is signed.

Rule 1 - Garden plots are assigned by the City of Orange on a first come, first received basis. Only City of Orange residents are eligible to lease plots. *Garden plots are limited to one plot per household, existing grandfathered two plot gardeners are exempt. Proof of residency (current utility bill) will be required with application and during the annual lease renewal period. Non-resident Gardeners who were renters prior to January 1, 2012 are grandfathered in. If all current plots are full, the City will maintain a waitlist to track those interested in leasing a plot. As plots become available, the City will refer to said waitlist and contact interested parties in the order requests were received. The following shall occur:

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, view potential plots, review the Rules, and exchange contact information. It is the responsibility of all Gardeners to check their email for communications from the co-Chairs and/or the City (which includes checking spam folder for misdirected emails), and to notify the co-Chairs and the City of email address changes.
3. Plot lease agreements are signed and paid for at the Community Services Department, located at 230 E. Chapman Ave., Orange, 92866.

Rule 2 - Full payment of annual garden plot fee and the non-refundable deposit (if applicable) are required at the time of submission of the Garden Plot Lease Agreement.

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 to whom the plot is assigned must work the plot and only use it for gardening purposes. All crops derived from a plot are the sole property of the Gardener to whom it is assigned. The City and the OCG are not responsible for items that are tampered with or stolen.

Gardeners may request to add a co-Gardener to their lease agreement by emailing the City of Orange. Both Gardeners must be City of Orange residents and adhere to the OCG Rules and Regulations at all times. Existing Gardeners with two plots (grandfathered in as of December 2021) will not be allowed to sign-on as a co-Gardener on another plot at the OCG.

For the safety of all gardeners, the gate combination may not be shared with any non OCG member under any circumstance without approval of the Oversight Committee member.

Rule 4 - If for any reason a Gardener is no longer able to maintain their plot(s), written notice must be given to and acknowledged by the City. Failure to clear the garden plot within 2 weeks (14 consecutive days) of notice will result in forfeiture of deposit.

Rule 5 - The City of Orange, in collaboration with the co-Chairs, shall be the 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 6 - Pets are not allowed in the OCG (excluding certified service animals).

Rule 7-The OCG is a drug, tobacco, and alcohol-free area. Smoking is not allowed in the garden. The growth of marijuana and illegal narcotics are strictly prohibited.

Rule 8 - Furniture used in garden plots must be specifically designed for outdoor use. Furniture that is broken or not deemed aesthetically pleasing by the CGOC must be removed. Gardeners may not maintain ponds in plots. Storage bins are allowed in garden plot space but cannot be more than 4 feet wide and 7 feet high.

Rule 9 - The OCG is open from dawn until dusk, seven days a week.

Rule 10 - At all times, each Gardener is responsible for demonstrating that their assigned plot is being utilized as an active, productive garden and is regularly being cared for. A compliant garden shows evidence of active gardening and is free of weeds, trash, and debris. If a Gardener needs help weeding due to illness or injury, they must contact the co-Chairs. If a Gardener is getting assistance from another OCG Gardener, they must communicate that information to the co-Chairs in advance.

The Accountability Committee is comprised of Gardeners who are responsible for ensuring all Gardeners maintain their plots in compliance with OCG Rules and Regulations. After an accountability walk through review of each plot is completed, any Gardeners with plots out of compliance will receive an official write up via email regarding non-compliance with a correction deadline. If a Gardener plans to not actively garden because of a soil treatment (i.e. solarizing, breaking down of hot compost, etc.), the co-Chairs must be notified in advance.

To maintain a healthy and thriving garden, all six scheduled accountability walkthrough reviews will be unannounced. The accountability walkthrough review Months for 2024 are:

- **February**
- **April**
- **June**
- **August**
- **October**
- **December**

Course of action when plots are non-compliant:

1. An official email notice of non-compliance and required course of action will be sent from the co-Chairs. City staff will be included in this correspondence.
2. If after two weeks the plot is still non-compliant, the City will send a final letter via email informing the Gardener that they have forfeited their plot.
3. The OCG will then clear the garden plot and the Gardener's \$100 deposit will be forfeited and any remaining supplies/equipment will be discarded.

Any Gardener deemed non-compliant on three accountability reviews within a 12-month period will need to vacate their plot(s) immediately and the deposit is forfeited. The three non-compliant reviews can include those accumulated in two consecutive lease years.

ATTENTION: *It is the responsibility of all Gardeners to check their email for communications from the co-Chairs and/or the City (which includes checking spam folder for misdirected emails), and to notify the co-Chairs and the City of any new email address.*

Rule 11 - OCG gates are to be closed at all times. The last Gardener leaving the OCG when no other Gardeners are present is responsible for locking the gate as they leave.

Rule 12 - The OCG is an organic garden. As such, organic products and natural gardening practices (such as use of vinegar, steam, etc.) are standard. Gardeners must first get the permission of the co-Chairs 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. Consult with chairpersons if you have questions about acceptable methods.

Rule 13 - For ease of plot turnover, all trees, shrubs, purslane and perennials (such as but not limited to rosemary, lavender, grapes, mint, passion vine) may not be planted directly into the ground. All such vegetation may only be planted in pots with a solid paver under the pot, which extends at least one inch past the base of the pot. Each Gardener is responsible for removing all planted pots upon departure from the OCG to receive their full deposit refund. If there is a question about which perennials are permitted, please contact the co-Chairs. All existing trees and shrubs which were grandfathered as of December 1, 2021, must be maintained at a height of no more than 6 feet.

Rule 14 - No permanent structures shall be constructed. 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, the two Gardeners must try to come to an agreement. If the two Gardeners are unable to agree, the co-Chairs will make the final decision.

Rule 15 - Fences erected around garden plots must be no higher than 6 ft. 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 chain link perimeter fence) and blends in with the environment. Brightly colored materials such as orange or lime green are not permitted on fencing, nor are metallic streamers, neon-colored ribbons or flashers. Fences must allow visual access to the garden plot from the outside.

Rule 16 - No Gardener shall carry out any gardening activities in such a way as to unreasonably interfere with the activities of neighboring Gardeners. 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 or paths. Harvest only from your assigned plot.

Rule 17 - Gardeners and visitors are prohibited from entering another Gardener's plot, except with the Gardener's expressed approval. Children and visitors are required to be supervised at all times and are expected to be considerate and not disturb other Gardeners or their plants. Failure to comply may be grounds for termination of garden lease. Damage done to other Gardener's plot may also result in forfeiture of lease.

Rule 18 - If assigned a plot bordering the perimeter of the OCG, the two-foot border between the plot and the perimeter fence/wall must always remain clear.

Rule 19 - 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 20 - SERVICE COMMITMENT. The OCG 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 is expected to attend the Annual Mandatory Garden Meeting and participate in scheduled workdays noted below:

ANNUAL MANDATORY GARDEN MEETING:

Will be held in the OCG common area on Saturday, February 3, 2024, at 12 noon.

2024 SCHEDULED WORKDAYS:

Saturday, January 20	8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Saturday, April 13	8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Sunday, July 14	8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Sunday, October 13	8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

REQUIRED NUMBER OF HOURS SERVED:

- For a renewing Gardener or a new Gardener starting between January 1 and March 31, a minimum of 4 hours of service is required
- For a new Gardener starting between April 1 and June 30, a minimum of 3 hours of service is required
- For a new Gardener starting between July 1 and September 30, a minimum of 2 hours of service is required
- For a new Gardener starting between October 1 and December 31, a minimum of 1 hour of service is required

It is each Gardeners' responsibility to attend service/workdays throughout the year and sign-in and out to account for service hours worked. Failure to perform the minimum required hours will result in the forfeiture of the garden plot. The required hours can be split-up between multiple service/workdays.

Rule 21 - Gardeners are to address all questions, issues, concerns, safety related items, etc. directly to the co-Chairs. The contact information for the chairpersons is posted in the bulletin board at the OCG.

Rule 22 – 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. The co-Chairs will inform all Gardeners of item availability and ask interested Gardeners to individually contact that person. This will keep the common area neat. For current Gardeners, dumping items in the common area will result in an official write up. For Gardeners who are terminating their lease, dumping items in the common area will result in forfeiture of deposit.

Rule 23 - Any gardener is welcome to post messages or information pertaining to the garden or items of interest about gardens in the bulletin board. The co-Chairs may remove any item deemed not appropriate for posting on the bulletin board.

Rule 24 - Unless using an automated watering system, unattended watering is not permitted. Before leaving the OCG for the day, Gardeners are expected to check faucets to ensure water is turned off in their plot. Gardeners must notify the co-Chairs immediately if they notice any water issues elsewhere in the garden.

Rule 25 - WATERING USING TIMER and low flow/soaker hose: times for watering must be set for early morning or late evening. HAND WATERING with garden hose nozzle: limited to 15 minutes per plot. Hoses must have a shut off nozzle attached.

The City and co-Chairs reserve the right to modify these requirements to comply with state and local mandates.

Rule 26 - No trash or debris of any kind should be left at the site. Before leaving the OCG for the day, 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. The garden trash bin is for trash generated at the garden only. No household waste is to be placed in the garden trash bin.