

Oak Hill Memorial Association

Regulations and Procedures

Oak Hill Memorial Association Policies and Procedures

Responsibility for enforcing the regulations herein rests with the Executive Director of the Association (hereafter referred to as the Director) and the Superintendent, who is authorized to make independent decisions regarding routine maintenance in the absence of the Director. The Executive Committee must approve any changes to this document. It is expected that the Officers, Director, and Superintendent will strive diligently to coordinate all work for the betterment of the cemetery.

I. Rules for Operation

A. This burial ground is sacred to the memory of the dead, and visitors are requested to conduct themselves in a manner appropriate to a place so dedicated.

B. Visitors shall not stand, sit, or walk upon any structures within the grounds of the cemetery. This includes monuments, markers, and mausolea, as well as coping and retaining walls.

C. Only employees are allowed on the cemetery grounds when the gates are closed and locked. Trespassers will be reported to the police.

D. No key to the cemetery property will be given to any unauthorized individual.

E. No one shall enter or leave the grounds except through an open gate.

F. Drivers shall not exceed 15 mph, and driving anywhere other than paved roadways is expressly forbidden.

G. Drivers shall not drive on the unpaved roads unless directed to do so by an employee of the Association.

H. Tours, or visitors in groups larger than five, shall obtain prior permission from the Director to enter and tour the grounds.

I. No buses, large trucks (more than sixteen feet in length), or other vehicles requiring a wide berth to maneuver are allowed inside the cemetery gates at any time without the consent of the Director.

J. Impressions, castings and rubbings of the structures within the Cemetery grounds shall not be permitted without the permission of the Director.

K. Parking

1. Use of the cemetery for parking for events occurring outside the cemetery or for any reason other than an authorized visit to the cemetery is expressly prohibited.

2. Lot owners or authorized visitors may park along the sides of existing paved roads or unpaved carriage-ways that are large enough to accommodate modern vehicles. Parked vehicles may not block paved roads at any time except during a funeral, and they shall not be parked within close proximity to any gravesite or gravesite feature.
3. Violators will be asked to properly park their vehicles and upon refusal, the vehicles shall be removed from the cemetery at the owners' expense.
4. Unattended illegally parked vehicles may be towed at owner's expense, and the superintendent shall ensure that signs so stating are posted in appropriate places in order to deter illegal parking.

L. Deterring Vandalism, Theft, and Damage to Cemetery Property

1. There shall be no picking of flowers, breaking of branches from shrubbery or trees, or disturbance of vegetation or lot ornaments or structures at any time or for any reason except by the written permission of the Director or under his direct supervision.
2. Any vandalism or theft of property shall be reported immediately to the Director.
4. The Director is charged with responsibility for filing a formal complaint with the Police Department of the City of Birmingham and for maintaining copies of such complaints for the Association's records. The Association shall in its discretion pursue all available remedies for ensuring that individuals causing harm to cemetery property are apprehended and duly prosecuted.

II. Rules for Grounds Maintenance

Groundskeepers employed by the Association will conduct all work necessary to reasonably maintain the grounds. Approval must be obtained for any volunteer group to engage in maintenance of the cemetery property, and volunteer work must be supervised by the Superintendent or an individual approved by the Association.

A. Vegetation

1. An annual inspection will be made of foundation vegetation in the cemetery. This will be by a qualified professional. The cemetery will request recommendations from the professional regarding trimming, removal of diseased trees and shrubs, or other pertinent information for maintaining the integrity of the landscape.
2. All diseased plants, subject to the discretion of the Director or his designee, will be promptly removed from the cemetery.
3. Sod will be planted on all grave sites upon burial. Existing grave sites shall be re-planted with sod as necessary in the discretion of the Director or his designees.

B. Walls and Fencing

1. Close attention will be paid to the condition of all walls that surround the Cemetery. Damage to these walls should be repaired as quickly as practically possible.
2. All gates to the cemetery will be in good shape, hung correctly, and operable. If gates are bent or otherwise damaged, they should be professionally straightened, re-painted and re-hung. If not in use, gates on the 11th Avenue North boundary of Oak Hill should remain secured at all times.
3. Border walls and fences should be maintained around the entire perimeter of the cemetery, in such a way as to discourage foot traffic through the grounds. Privacy shrubbery will be maintained where appropriate.

4. When damage occurs, all repairs made to fencing and walls will be professionally repaired by a licensed and bonded contractor, under the direct supervision of the Director.

C. Roads, Carriage-ways, and other Access Lanes

1. Roads and carriage-ways will be kept free and clear of debris.
2. Unpaved carriage-ways appropriate for automobile use will be kept in repair so that unsightly washes, holes, or other similar obstructions do not occur. When they do occur and the condition becomes known, the area will be temporarily closed to vehicles until repair has been made, the sod replaced, and sufficient time has passed for the scar to heal naturally.

D. Sunken Graves

The superintendent should be alert to the condition of all graves, and as soon as practically possible, ensure that sunken graves are filled in with extra dirt and re-sodded.

III. Lots, Interments and Monuments

A. Preservation and Restoration of Gravesite Features

The most visible expression of the cultural importance of the cemetery is its monuments and mausoleums. Continuing care, protection, and seeing to the restoration of monuments is the primary mission of the Association, beyond regular maintenance of grounds, vegetation and Association structures. Not only is the Association committed to seeing to the repair of damaged or deteriorating gravesite features, it is committed to undertaking repairs and protective measures by taking care to preserve their historic integrity. Because of the historical character of the cemetery, all repairs other than minor leveling of small stones or monuments must be pre-approved and work completed by licensed and bonded professionals knowledgeable about and skilled in preservation techniques.

1. All repairs and restorations must be scheduled with the director.
2. In the event owners of lots or their relatives cannot be located, the cemetery reserves the right to make repairs and charge the lot owners.
3. The Association will not permit inappropriate changes to be made to individual burial spaces or family lots which will compromise the historic integrity of the cemetery.

B. Sale of lots

1. Lots are sold for no purpose other than for the burial of human bodies and no part of the cemetery is allowed to be used otherwise.
2. No sale or transfer of a lot shall be effective unless the director has been notified in writing and unless all cemetery claims against the transferring lot owner shall have been paid.
3. In cases where a family lot is purchased by more than one family member, interments will proceed on a first-come, first-served basis, unless the family provides written instructions stipulating otherwise.

C. Lot Maintenance and Restoration

1. All lots are sold with the specific provision that trees, shrubs, and plants growing thereon are to be undisturbed and may only be removed or pruned by consent of the Association.

2. No enclosures of any kind, whether of coping, curbing, fencing, hedging, flowers, or borders shall be placed around any lot. With prior consent from the Association management, owners may outline lot borders with a small shrub at each corner, provided such shrubs do not extend into or interfere with another lot.
3. Planting on a lot may be allowed with the approval of the Superintendent and written consent of the Director. In no case shall the work of planting or preparing flower beds be executed except by the employees of the cemetery and under the superintendent's supervision, or by an individual approved by the Association.
4. No lot owner shall have the right to make alterations to his/her lot without the written consent of the Superintendent and Director. This includes the removal or planting of trees or shrubbery.
5. No walkways of any material shall be allowed on any lot. No glass, tin, trinkets, or artificial materials are allowed on lots. Only painted wire settees, iron seats, or stone benches of a configuration approved by the Director and in good repair are allowed on a lot. Potted plants, cut flowers, and cut-flower vases may be placed on lots. All empty vases shall be removed from the grounds and stored in the maintenance building.
6. Cemetery employees will remove broken, dangerous, unsightly or prohibited objects from lots.

D. Interments

1. No lot owner shall permit a body to be interred on his or her lot under any contract of sale or lease for any consideration.
2. The Association shall determine the direction in which graves are placed.
3. All graves shall be dug to a depth that allows for a clearance of fourteen inches between the top of the vault or container and the natural level of the ground.
4. If difficulties are encountered during the interment process resulting higher than normal expenses for digging the grave, the additional costs shall be the responsibility of the lot owner.
5. No grave will be dug on a lot until the lot owner or an authorized representative of the lot owner has signed an order.
6. Notice of an interment must be given 48 hours prior to scheduled interment.
7. Payment for interments must be made in advance, unless special approval from the director is obtained.
6. No interments shall be made except in the presence of the Superintendent or other authorized representative of the Association.
7. As soon as a funeral procession passes within the gates it shall be under the control of the superintendent or his designee, who shall decide the route, the disposition of vehicles, and who will provide the general supervision and control of work performed at the funeral. Funeral Directors are required to stop processions in their charge at the gates and must not proceed until given permission to do so.
8. Funeral Directors are required to have the rough-box on the grounds not less than three hours before the interment is due to be made.
9. Burials arranged on Saturdays and Sundays will require an overtime charge.
10. Multiple interments in one grave shall not be permitted unless made at the time of interment in watertight vaults and in no event unless the uppermost shall be not less than 4 1/2 feet below the surface.
11. Coffins must be contained within concrete vaults.
- 11a. Cremains must be contained in a recoverable container or vault.
12. Burial of cremains on an occupied lot shall be permitted only at the discretion of the Director.

12. Should there be an interment on a lot not paid for, the Association shall have the right to disinter and remove the body to a single-space grave and to resell the lot. The proceeds of such resale shall be applied to the expenses of removal and cost of a single space.
13. Orders for disinterring shall be given in writing. The Association must grant permission for the disinterment and approve the agency or the company performing the service.
14. Interments should be arranged only by the Superintendent or Director with a family member of the deceased.
15. The family member must come to the cemetery, instruct the superintendent as to the exact location on the lot of the interment, schedule the interment, sign a release, and pay for the interment at least 48 hours before interment is planned.

E. Monuments and Statuary

1. No statuary, lot monuments, or individual gravesite markers of any kind may be placed or used to replace existing markers without the written approval of the Association.
2. No statuary, monuments, or markers shall be put in place by anyone other than a cemetery employee or a company or organization approved by the Association, and none shall be placed without a suitable foundation.
3. In order to protect the historic and sacred integrity of the cemetery, any new monument designs must have the written approval of the Association. The lot owner or descendent must review monument and marker plans with the Director. If an order to place a monument that has not received prior approval is made, and if that marker does not meet the Association's design specifications, the marker cannot be placed.
6. Once an approved monument or marker arrives at the cemetery, the director or superintendent shall notify the lot owner and inform them that payment for laying a foundation must be made before the monument or marker can be placed.