

COMMUNITY GARDEN RULES AND GUIDELINES

ENGLISH

The Community Garden provides the opportunity for public housing tenants to access a plot to grow vegetables, herbs and flowers for personal use. The gardens also provide a space for plot holders and their guests to come together and socialise. Cultivating Community (CC) is funded by the Department of Human Services (DHS) to manage these gardens. Principles of community participation and environmental sustainability guide the management of the community gardens. Garden Support Workers visit the gardens to: build and maintain community involvement, provide horticultural advice and support to plot holders and ensure the maintenance of the garden. As community gardens are built on DHS land or leased by DHS the Residential Tenancy Act and the DHS consumer charter are enforceable. This means that negative behaviour in the Community Gardens can affect plot holder's tenancy.

1. General conduct in the garden

Plot holders and visitors should respect the gardens as communal spaces. The code of conduct, rules, guidelines and responsibilities outlined below must be followed by plot-holders.

Visitors to the community garden must adhere to the code of conduct. Plot holders must ensure that their visitors are aware of the code of conduct as plot-holders will be held responsible for the actions of their visitors.

2. Code of conduct

- 2.1 Treat everybody in the garden equally, fairly and with respect.
- 2.2 Respect one another's beliefs, cultural differences and points of view.
- 2.3 Behave in a manner that maintains the security, safety and harmony of the garden.
- 2.4 Encourage and support each other.

3. Guidelines

3.1 Who can have a plot?

Public housing tenants or residents living on the estate where the garden is located are eligible for a plot. CC will check with the department annually to verify plot holder eligibility.

Only one garden plot is available to each household. Preference will be given to tenants who do not have their own private garden. Where there are vacant plots and no waiting list:

- Other individuals or organisations may be eligible for a garden plot should there be a perceived benefit to the tenant community.
- Plot holders may be given a second plot where there is no demand from the community for plots, an additional plots waiting list will be established and plots will be allocated in line with that waiting list. Plot holders should discuss this with the Garden Support Worker. Additional plots will be provided on the basis that plot-holders will be asked to hand back these additional plots if a tenant or resident applies for a plot.

3.2 Applying for a garden plot

Applicants must:

- Read, or have read to them, these guidelines.
- Then complete and sign an application form.

CC will check with DHS to make sure that the applicant is a tenant or resident and eligible for a garden plot.

3.3 Plot allocation

If no plots are available at the time of applying, the applicants name will be placed on the community garden's waiting list and will be advised when a plot becomes available. Applicants should notify CC if they will be absent for over one month in case a plot becomes available during their absence.

Allocation of plots will be based on date of application and the physical needs of the applicant. When a plot becomes available CC will:

- Contact the applicant by phone leaving a message where possible when the applicant is not available.
- If no response is received to the telephone contact CC will write to the applicant providing two weeks for a response.
- Should the applicant not respond by the due date the plot will be allocated to the next person on the waiting list.

To be allocated a plot, the applicants must sign Agreement for Use of Community Gardens, agreeing to the terms of use, including an agreement to abide by the requirements outlined in these rules and guidelines.

3.4 Plot fees

There is an annual fee required for a garden plot which will be collected by CC staff once a year in the garden. Money from the fees will be used for garden supplies, maintenance and social gatherings for the plot holders. It will also be used for other costs as determined collaboratively by the plot holders and the Garden Support Worker.

3.5 Forfeiture of garden plots

Plots are allocated to the person or persons that have signed the *Agreement for Use of Community Gardens*. Plots are not transferable; plot holders cannot give their plot to another person. If a plot holder is no longer using their plot for any reason, they must advise CC, return their community garden key and collect their key deposit. The plot will be reallocated to the next eligible person on the waiting list.

3.6 Keys

Plot-holders are required to pay a key deposit on collecting a key to the garden. The key deposit is refunded if the plot holder returns their key when handing back their plot. Plot holders must not give their key to another person or cut a second copy without the permission of CC. If a plot holder loses their key, they need to inform the Community Garden Support Worker and pay another deposit for a replacement key to be cut.

3.7 Management

DHS has contracted CC to manage community gardens that are part of the Community Gardens Program. This means that CC is responsible for the day to day management of the gardens; including but not limited to: waiting lists, garden maintenance, plot holders issues and complaints, and the general garden environment

3.8 Problems and complaints in the garden

Garden related issues are the responsibility of CC. If plot holders have any concerns about the garden or about other plot holders or their visitors they are strongly encouraged to contact CC on 9429 3084, or the Garden Support Worker via the number displayed in the garden. CC will deal with such matters efficiently and in a fair and reasonable manner. If a plot holder is unhappy with any decision they may refer the matter to the Community Gardens Program Manager in DHS on 9096 8292.

4. Rules

Breaching the following rules will lead to warnings and where applicable suspension from the garden:

- 4.1** Plot holders or their visitors must not remove plants, soil or equipment from another plot holder's plot without that plot holder's permission.
- 4.2** Plot holders or their visitors must not wilfully damage any area of the Community Gardens.
- 4.3** Plot holders or their visitors must not enter while under the influence of, or consume, alcohol or any form of illegal substance in the garden.
- 4.4** **Violence** in any form is unacceptable.
- 4.5** **Sexual harassment** in any form is unacceptable.
- 4.6** **Bullying** in any form is unacceptable. Bullying comes in many forms including but not limited to: false accusations, psychological harassment, gossiping and humiliation.

5. Responsibilities of plot-holders for their own plots

5.1 General maintenance of plots

Plot holders are responsible for maintaining their plot throughout the year. The plot must be actively used to grow plants, and be free of weeds and rubbish. If a plot holder is unable to tend a plot due to illness, travel, work or emergency for one month or more they must:

- contact the Garden Support Worker notifying them of the expected duration of their absence,
- If unable to contact the Garden Support Worker ask someone to notify the Garden Support Worker of your absence.

If the Garden Support Worker is not notified of a plot holder's absence the plot holder risks losing their plot.

5.2 Plants

Vegetables, herbs and flowers can be grown in garden plots. Trees and large permanent shrubs are not to be grown in plots or planted by plot holders in the community garden. Trees and permanent shrubs may be planted by the Garden Support Worker in consultation with the garden community.

5.3 Soil

Plot holders are responsible for maintaining and improving the condition of the soil in their plot. It is important that nutrients are put back into the soil after every season as plants use up the nutrients in the soil as they grow. This should be done following organic gardening principles by adding manure, compost and mulch regularly. Soil is not to be deposited or removed from any areas of the garden.

5.4 Paths

Paths are for access, not storage. Paths around plots must be kept clear of weeds, rubbish and belongings at all times.

5.5 Building and other materials

Under no circumstances should plot holders bring any building materials such as but not limited to wooden or bamboo stakes, glass, metal, plastic or painted wooden or metal poles into the garden. Plot-holders can bring string into the garden for supporting climbing plants like beans and melons. CC will provide all structural materials required in the garden. These materials will be stored securely by the Garden Support Worker and supplied to plot holders on request.

5.6 Personal items

Personal items such as watering cans, buckets, manure bags or small garden tools such as hand trowels may be kept on the plot holder's garden plot, these items cannot be stored on paths or anywhere else in the garden. Items not used in gardening must not be kept on the plot.

5.7 Remove items with red tags

Any items tagged by the Garden Support Worker with a red tag must be removed from the garden within two weeks. Dangerous materials such as glass, sharp metal and other hazards will be removed by support workers without warning to maintain garden safety.

6. Responsibilities of plot-holders in the community garden

5.8 Waste management

There are compost bins in the community gardens and plot holders are required to put their kitchen waste and garden waste in the bins to make compost for their gardens. Compost is to be distributed at the discretion of the Garden Support Worker. Wood, plastic bags, tin cans, polystyrene boxes or other rubbish should never be added to the compost. Rubbish should be placed in bins if available or removed from the garden.

5.9 Water management

All plot holders are required to adhere to the guidelines for water use outlined by the state government. Plot holders must not waste water in the garden. Hoses must be hand held at all times and must not be left in plots running unattended. Nozzles on hoses are not to be removed. The use of water from water tanks with watering cans is strongly encouraged. Garden hoses must remain connected to the tap and wound up. Hoses must not be left on or across pathways.

5.10 Garden pests and diseases

No chemical insecticides or herbicides are to be used in the community gardens. Plot holders can use safe products such as pyrethrum or garlic sprays and for the eradication of snails only Multiguard®. Please ask your Garden Support Worker if you require further information.

5.11 Communal plots

Communal plots can be used for herbs, flowers, trees and vines for communal use. Personal vegetables and herbs cannot be grown in these plots. Plot-holders must gain the Garden Support Worker's approval before planting anything in the communal beds or removing existing plants.

5.12 Tools

Plot holders must provide their own tools (such as hand trowels). Where there is a shed, larger gardening tools for communal use will be kept there. If any garden equipment is missing, plot holders should report this to the Garden Support Worker as soon as possible.

7 Other matters

7.1 Animals

Dogs, cats and other pets must not be brought into the community gardens.

7.2 Garden security

Plot holders must close and lock the garden gate when they enter or exit the community garden and lock the shed whenever it is not in use and prior to leaving the garden.

7.3 Children in the community gardens

Children are welcome in the Community Gardens under the condition that they are supervised by a responsible adult at all times. Plot holders will be held responsible for the actions of their own and other children they invite into the garden.

7.4 Sale of garden produce

Garden plots are available for personal use only. Plot holders are **not** permitted to sell plants or produce that have been grown in the community garden.

7.5 Noise

During morning and evening times in the community garden, noise levels must be kept to a reasonable level. Please consider the garden's neighbours. Noise that disrupts neighbour's quiet enjoyment of their property can be considered a breach of tenancy. Plot holders making unreasonable noise may lose their plots.

7.6 Amendments to rules and guidelines

CC reserves the right to amend these rules and guidelines. Where amendments have been made to these rules and guidelines the Garden Support Worker will bring the amendment to the attention of plot holders by:

- Displaying a notice in the garden,
- Calling a meeting to discuss the amendment; and/or
- Writing to the plot holder's address outlining the changes.

Changes to these rules and guidelines will be implemented after this process has been undertaken.

Copies of the amended guidelines will be provided to plot holders. An abridged version of the rules and guidelines will be displayed in community gardens.

8. Breaches of Rules and Guidelines

8.1 Process for general breaches of the rules and guidelines:

Breach of the code of conduct, rules, guidelines or responsibilities may result in the following:

- a) First offence - a warning letter will be sent.
- b) Second offence - a second warning letter will be sent.
- c) Third offence - Implementation of the full breach process outlined below

8.2 Process for serious breaches of the rules and guidelines:

Where an allegation of a breach of one or more of the following rules 4.4,4.5 and 4.6 is made CC will suspend the plot holder who has been accused of the breach while an investigation either by CC, or the police should the police be involved, is undertaken of the allegation. Plot holders are encouraged to call the police where they witness or are involved in violent behaviour or sexual assault. If the allegation is proven the plot holder will be banned from the garden for not less than 12 months.

Process for breaches of rules including violence, sexual harassment and bullying, or third offenses outlined in section 8.1:

The following process will be followed in relation to serious breaches:

- a) Where police are involved and are undertaking an investigation CC will await the outcome of the investigation.
- b) Where police are not involved, CC staff will follow up the incident by contacting all parties involved and any witnesses. Police will be contacted if needed. The Community Garden Program Manager and Local Housing Office will be informed.
- c) A meeting will be called for key parties involved. Interpreters will be provided if needed. A representative of the Local Housing Office or the Community Gardens Program Manager or their representative will attend.
- d) Key parties will be informed of the outcome of meeting within five working days. This will be in writing and translated if necessary.
- e) If plot holders are suspended from the community garden their community garden keys must be returned immediately. They have five working days to remove any vegetables or plants from their plot. This visit must be supervised by a worker from CC.
- f) During the length of the ban entry to the community garden is strictly forbidden.
- g) The community garden plot will be re-allocated to the first person on the waiting list.
- h) After the expiration of the period of the ban the following will happen:
 - The parties including the banned individual will be invited to a meeting with a representative of CC, Local Housing Office or the Community Gardens Program Manager to discuss re-entry to the community garden.
 - If the banned person has complied with the terms of the ban they will be eligible to reapply for a plot.
 - Should it be agreed that the ban from the garden be lifted the individuals name will be placed on the waiting list and they will be allocated a plot according to the waiting list.
- Should the individual not agree with the outcome they can appeal against the decision by completing an appeal form or contacting the Community Gardens Program Manager at the Department of Human Services on 9096 8292. If the appeal is unsuccessful at the level it is automatically referred to the Housing Appeals Office for review of the decision.