



Borough of Island Heights

Community Garden Agreement (2023)

General

1. The garden area is open dawn to dusk, seven days a week (March 15-November 15).
2. Upon payment of the Community Garden Bed Rental Fee, gardeners will receive a key for the locks on each access gate. If a gardener's key is lost, replacement keys will be available from the Borough upon payment of a \$5.00 fee.
3. Visitors to the garden are only permitted if accompanied by a Gardener.
4. Gardeners must comply with all applicable federal and state laws, local Ordinances and Executive Orders.

Eligibility

1. To be eligible for a Garden Bed Rental, the Gardener must be a Resident or Property Owner in the Borough of Island Heights and Eighteen (18) Years of Age or older.
2. Gardeners must agree to abide by this Community Garden Agreement, signed by Gardeners prior to the start of each gardening season (year).

Community Garden Governance

1. Gardeners shall select from their ranks up to four gardeners to serve on the Community Garden Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee), who shall be approved by the Mayor and Council via Resolution.
2. The Advisory Committee shall work together with all gardeners to ensure the garden operates smoothly, gardening beds are kept orderly, and the rules of the community garden are being followed. The garden will be divided into quadrants with each member of the Advisory Committee supervising a single quadrant, to include tracking of volunteer hours and maintenance issues.
3. Gardeners shall not plant anything that is unlawful to grow in the state of New Jersey.

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Communication and Courtesy

1. Community Gardening requires working together and next to each other in harmony. Please be courteous in all interactions, and work together to keep the garden a secure and enjoyable place where all participants can garden and socialize in a neighborly manner.
2. Recognizing that many people seek the peace and quiet that gardening in nature provides, please be respectful of fellow Gardeners' desire for quiet time and use of the garden as a refuge.
3. The Advisory Committee may consider suspending the participation of gardeners who; fail to plant their bed, fail to routinely remove weeds and other invasive growth from their bed and/or allow vegetation to routinely grow outside of the bounds of their assigned bed.
4. Uninvited harvesting from others beds is not permitted.
5. It is recommended that you not leave gardening tools in your bed; anything left is at your own risk.

Garden Bed Maintenance

1. Use of mowers and weed-whackers is not allowed.
2. Please lock the garden gates and turn off the water upon departure, after checking to ensure the garden area is clear of other Gardeners.
3. Each gardener is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of their garden bed, as well as the pathways around their bed. If the Gardener is away, it is up to them to have a friend or neighboring Gardener maintain and pick the items in their garden to keep or donate.
4. Gardeners must demonstrate that they are tending their beds by May 15 of each year or their bed may be forfeited and assigned to another gardener.

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5. If you have experienced a life event of any kind (hurt back, illness, other obligations taking too much of your time) and you find that you will not be able to work your bed, you will have until June 15th to relinquish your bed and get your money back, if and only if, there is another person on the waiting list who is willing to take it over. After that deadline, please be in touch with one of the four garden Administrators to let them know of your situation.
6. There will be three (3) garden inspection dates (see calendar). If your bed and surrounding pathways are unkempt (weedy, rotten produce), you will be contacted to see if the problem can be resolved and given five (5) days to clear the bed and paths. If, after three warnings, your bed continues to be unkempt, you will be asked to return your garden key and will be prohibited from applying for another garden bed for the period of one (1) year.
7. Because of the large amount of unharvested produce in 2022, we have formed a Harvest Committee for 2023. It is very important to everyone to get a handle on wasted food and we appreciate your cooperation in this matter. Every Saturday afternoon, there will be a box/bag/basket at the north gate (closest to the water pump) for contributions. Produce will be donated that Sunday morning to a local food bank.
8. The Committee would like to try a different kind of mulch for the pathways. Please consider saving your autumn leaves (oak leaves are particularly good, as they do not break down quickly) and/or pine needles, dried grass clippings from organic lawns, etc. to use as mulch in your bed and surrounding paths. A variety of (organic) materials may be used as an experiment to see what works best for us.
9. Temporary structures in beds are limited to a height of 6' and are to be removed upon relinquishment of the bed. No tools or ornaments are to be placed on the perimeter fence.
10. Bed corners are clearly marked with stakes and numbers; these are not to be removed.
11. Gardeners should consider the mature height and spread of their plantings. Please do not plant spreading plants close to the bed's boundary such that they impede walking along the paths. Consider growing up rather than out by using trellises, stakes, cages etc.

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12. Please do not place plants where they will shade your neighbor's bed or escape into the paths when they reach maturity.
13. Individual fencing of beds is allowed but it must be made of chicken wire or other open mesh materials that allow light transmission. Keep fences and structures under 6' in height. Fencing must go on the inside of the officially marked bed boundaries.
14. By November 5th, garden beds are to be cleared of all decorative items, tools and plant debris.
15. Garden bed renewals will begin each January and payment is required by March 1st of the new gardening season (year). Gardeners who fail to renew by signing the Gardening Agreement and paying the Bed Rental Fee by March 1st of each year will forfeit their bed.
16. Please do not let the milkweed establish itself in your garden bed. Please do not plant herbs (for ex., the mint family) directly in your bed – plant them in pots (buried or otherwise), to keep them under control.

Common Area and Path Maintenance

1. Gardeners are required to keep the paths adjacent to their beds free of weeds and to apply wood chips or other mulch, as needed.
2. Wood chips are only to be used on paths; no wood chips are to be used in garden beds.
3. Please keep the paths clear for other gardeners.
4. All gardeners are required to complete at least two hours of volunteer time to help in maintaining the garden paths and common areas. The garden will be divided up into quadrants with each quadrant being assigned to one of the four Garden Administrators, who will track maintenance, volunteer time, etc. for those gardeners in their quadrant.
5. A pollinator garden was planted for the benefit of all and needs seasonal maintenance. Please devote some of your volunteer time to this area. See your quadrant team leader for guidance.

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Watering

1. It is suggested that beds be covered with leaves, hay/straw, or clean grass clippings from untreated lawns to reduce water evaporation.
2. Please conserve the use of water by using hand-held watering devices and shutting off the hose spigot when watering is completed.
3. Please coil the hoses neatly after each use.

Organic Gardening

1. The use of non-organic pesticides and/or herbicides is prohibited. If necessary, you are encouraged to use insecticidal soap or other organic measures to control insects, such as picking off insects and disposing of them in soapy water or alcohol.
2. Please use only Organic Materials Research Institute (OMRI) approved products which is indicated on the label of all approved products.
3. Building raised beds is at the option of the gardener. Do not use treated lumber for constructing raised beds.

Trash and Weed Disposal

1. Please dispose of organic materials in the designated compost area. Only organic materials are to be added to this pile (no discarded tomato cages, plant markers, wooden structures, etc.). There may or may not be individual black compost bins throughout the garden. Unless you have been invited to utilize these bins, please use the area outside of the fence, as in the past.
2. Trash and litter must be removed from the garden site by gardeners, carry in – carry out is the rule.

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Affirmation and Release

I understand that the Borough of Island Heights permits usage of community garden beds for gardening purposes only and maintains all other rights, including the right to full access of all plots at all times and, if necessary, may deny any individual's access to the community garden site for the safety and welfare of others.

I understand that the Borough of Island Heights assumes no liability for injury, damage, theft, or loss of property belonging to garden users. I hereby assume the risk of accidental injury to myself, users of, and visitors to my garden bed. I hereby waive any liability from accidental injury resulting from participation in program or garden activities and waive any liability claims against The Borough of Island Heights, Community Garden Volunteers or any other persons or entities assisting in the community garden in any way.

I agree to work cooperatively with other Gardeners and the members of the Advisory Committee to ensure the Community Garden and my garden bed are properly maintained and that the rules established for the safe and efficient operation of the Community Garden are followed by me and any guests I bring to the Community Garden.

I agree to contact one of the Advisory members (and not Town Hall employees/Council members/Mayor) with questions, comments, or complaints. If needed, the Garden's Council Liaison will be notified to resolve any problems that cannot otherwise be resolved.

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Community Garden Agreement Signature Page

I understand and agree to abide by the terms of the Community Garden Agreement and understand that Mayor and Council will not approve any application for an additional year's rental if Gardener fails to comply:

Name of Gardener (print) _____

Street Address _____

PO Box _____

Phone # _____

Email Address _____

Name of Co-Gardener (if applicable) _____

Phone # _____

Email Address _____

Signature of Gardener

Date

Signature of Co-Gardener (if applicable)

Date