

WASHINGTON SQUARE WEST CIVIC ASSOCIATION

COMMUNITY GARDEN RULES

Rev. 11, effective 2022

The mission of the Washington Square West Community Gardens is to provide garden members the opportunity to learn about and experience the benefits of gardening within their urban setting. The gardens support community building through interactions with neighbors, fostering a sense of ownership and pride in the neighborhood, and greening of the community's public space. This mission is consistent with and supportive of the missions of the Washington Square West Civic Association and the City of Philadelphia Department of Parks and Recreation.

I. Eligibility for Membership in WSWCA Community Gardens

1. WSWCA Community Gardening privileges shall be reserved for the following persons:
 - a. Residents of the Washington Square West community as defined by the boundaries of the WSWCA (Broad, Chestnut, South and 7th Streets). Wash West residents are eligible for gardening privileges at any WSWCA Community Garden.
 - b. Persons living outside the boundaries of Washington Square West whose primary residence is within the boundaries defined below are eligible for gardening privileges in the South Street Community Garden:
12th Street (west), Spruce Street (north), 5th Street (east), Catharine Street (south).
2. Any member of a WSWCA Community Garden who is in good standing as of 30 November of the previous year but who does not meet the eligibility criteria stated above (Section I.1.) shall be permitted to retain gardening privileges as long as the member remains in compliance with WSWCA Community Garden Rules.
3. No individual or household shall have gardening privileges in more than one WSWCA Community Garden simultaneously, or be assigned more than one plot in any garden. Individuals or households who are members of community gardens elsewhere in Philadelphia County are ineligible for simultaneous membership in WSWCA Community Gardens.

II. Assignment of Gardening Privileges

1. Authority to assign gardening privileges rests solely with the Chair of the WSWCA Greening Committee, who shall maintain for this purpose a wait list of applicants.
 - a. Applicants for gardening privileges must submit a completed application and payment of the application fee.
 - i. The application fee shall be determined by the WSWCA Greening Committee, but shall not exceed the annual gardening dues then in effect.
 - ii. The application fee shall not be counted toward the first year's gardening dues upon an applicant's admission to a WSWCA Community Garden.
 - iii. The application fee is nonrefundable. Fees will be held by WSWCA and used to offset direct costs.
 - iv. Applicants may indicate a first and second choice of garden among the gardens for which they are eligible.
 - b. An applicant's chronological placement on the wait list shall be determined by the date on which *both* the completed application *and* full payment of the application fee are received by WSWCA.
 - c. It is the responsibility of the applicant to inform WSWCA of any change of address, phone number or e-mail while waiting for a garden plot.
2. Vacant plots in each garden shall be offered to applicants on the wait list for that garden or for the garden they have indicated as their second choice.
 - a. Priority for plot assignment and garden membership shall be determined by the date of application.
 - b. However, current paid members of WSWCA shall have their applications advanced 6 months earlier than their actual application date.

III. Membership Dues & Additional Requirements

1. Annual membership dues are determined by WSWCA in consultation with the Greening Committee and may change from year to year.
2. Dues are payable to WSWCA.

3. Dues payment must be received by WSWCA no later than March 15th each year. Non-payment of dues by this deadline shall result in forfeiture of garden membership.
4. Dues are not refundable after March 15th.
5. Member dues may not be transferred or assigned to any other garden member or to any other applicant for garden membership.
6. Payment of dues shall constitute member's agreement to adhere to WSWCA Community Garden Rules.
7. All members (including those sharing a plot) must sign release forms and liability waivers as required by WSWCA.
8. Members must provide the WSWCA Greening Committee and their garden coordinators with their name, address, telephone number and (if applicable) email address, and notify coordinators promptly of any changes in this information.
9. WSWCA Community Garden members have no property interest in plots. Plots and gardening privileges are not transferable by any means whatsoever, including inheritance, sale, assignment or rent.

IV. Administration of Community Gardens

1. The Chair of the Greening Committee reserves the right not to renew the gardening privileges of any community gardener who does not adhere to these Community Garden Rules.
2. WSWCA shall act as treasurer of the Community Gardens, shall write grants, issue checks and reimburse proper and reasonable expenses. Garden coordinators shall provide timely requests for reimbursement of expenses.
3. Funds collected through payment of annual dues and voluntary donations shall be held by WSWCA in separate accounts for each of the three community gardens. These funds are to be used for the appropriate upkeep and improvement of the gardens, including water bills.
4. The WSWCA treasurer shall provide the Greening Committee with a year-end report of revenue and expenditures, the report to be reviewed by the garden coordinators and any discrepancies resolved.
5. The WSWCA Greening Committee is responsible for the review and administration of these rules. WSWCA Community Garden Rules may be changed from time to time without advance warning to members. Revisions to these rules must be approved by the Greening Committee.
6. A WSWCA community garden member may transfer from one garden to another on the recommendation of the originating garden's coordinator, the receiving garden coordinator, and the concurrence of the Greening Committee.
7. The Chair of the WSWCA Greening Committee is authorized to resolve, or to refer to the WSWCA Board for resolution, any situation or occurrence that is not specifically addressed by these Community Garden Rules.
8. Each WSWCA Community Garden may establish its own rules only with respect to water use, trash, **snow removal** and maintenance of common areas.
9. No rule or policy of an individual garden shall take precedence over these Rules or a WSWCA Bylaw or decision.

V. Garden Coordinators

1. Each Community Garden shall have up to two (2) volunteer coordinators chosen from among the garden's members.
2. Coordinators for the following year shall be chosen from among the garden's membership.
3. Coordinators are members *ex officio* of the WSWCA Greening Committee, and shall be responsible to the Chairperson of the Greening Committee.
4. Responsibilities of coordinators shall be:
 - a. Monitoring gardeners' compliance with the Rules Governing Community Garden Members detailed below in Section VI.
 - b. Consultation with the WSWCA Greening Committee on renewal, non-renewal and termination of gardening privileges.
 - c. Organization and scheduling of maintenance tasks, meetings and other activities of the membership as necessary.
 - d. Liaison with the WSWCA Greening Committee, and with the Philadelphia Parks and Recreation network of community gardens, the Philadelphia Horticultural Society, and other community groups to carry out projects and secure resources as appropriate.
 - e. Arranging events for access to and engagement with the garden by the local community.

VI. Rules Governing Community Garden Members

1. Individual plots shall not exceed 100 square feet in size. Vacant plots shall be left fallow until assigned to a new member.
2. Plots shall be weed free by May 1 and planted by May 15th each year. Members who fail to meet this deadline forfeit their gardening privileges.
3. Plots shall be cleared of all dead plants, debris and plant supports by December 15th each year.
4. All gardening supplies and tools are to be stored inside the member's assigned plot or, if space is available, in the designated common storage area of the garden. WSWCA is not liable for personal belongings left in any Community Garden.
5. Each plot and adjacent pathways shall be kept free of weeds; this is the sole responsibility of the plot holder.
6. Garden pathways shall be kept clear and unobstructed at all times. Planters, flower boxes, birdbaths, water-collection barrels, storage containers and similar items may not be placed in the pathways.
7. Open compost heaps are not permitted in any WSWCA Community Garden. Composting is permitted only in containers and locations designed for this purpose.
8. Each gardener shall be responsible for control of pests and diseases within the assigned garden plot. Organic methods of control shall be used whenever possible.
9. Use of the garden plots is primarily for flowers, vegetables and small bushes that do not cast shadows on adjacent plots. The planting of trees is not permitted. Invasive plants (such as Jerusalem artichoke, fig trees, horse radish, wild strawberry, morning glory and mint) must be contained, and are the responsibility of the member who plants them.
10. No pets are permitted in any WSWCA Community Garden.
11. Children under 16 years of age are not permitted in a Community Garden except under the close supervision of a member.
12. Garden members shall not permit unsupervised access by a non-member or unauthorized person (including the sharing of an entry key or lock combination) to any WSWCA Community Garden.
13. Garden members shall tend their own plots. No one other than a current member shall be permitted to perform gardening duties in any WSWCA Community Garden.
 - a. Members who are temporarily unable to garden must notify a coordinator, who shall arrange short-term assistance.
 - b. In the event of long-term absence or disability of a garden member, the general membership of the garden shall assume responsibility for plot upkeep and harvesting. No plot shall be maintained in this fashion for longer than one season, or from one season into the next.
14. Each garden member shall share in the common maintenance tasks in the garden and participate in at least half of the scheduled cleanups each year.
15. The following activities are prohibited and shall result in immediate revocation of gardening privileges:
 - a. Cultivation of illegal or controlled substances in a WSWCA Community Garden.
 - b. Theft from another gardener's plot or from garden common areas.
 - c. Vandalism of any WSWCA Community Garden, or of any plot or structure belonging to a Community Garden.
 - d. Commercial use of WSWCA Community Garden space, including cultivation of produce for sale or restaurant use.

VII. Termination of Gardening Privileges

1. The WSWCA Greening Committee may at any time and without prior notice terminate the gardening privileges of any member who fails to adhere to the above Rules Governing Community Garden Members. Termination decisions rest with the Chair of the Greening Committee, who shall consult as necessary with garden coordinators and members.
2. The gardening privileges of a member in good standing may not be revoked solely for the purpose of making a garden plot available to an applicant on the wait list.

VIII. Grievances

1. Any member of a WSWCA Community Garden has the right to submit a grievance on issues of garden governance and on decisions of garden coordinators that may have a negative effect on the member's standing in the garden, including termination of gardening privileges.
2. All grievances shall be presented first to the garden coordinators.
3. Any unresolved grievance shall be submitted by letter or e-mail to the WSWCA Greening Committee.

4. The Chair of the Greening Committee shall acknowledge receipt of the grievance by letter or e-mail, and shall act promptly to resolve the grievance.
5. The Greening Committee's decisions on grievances may be appealed in writing within 14 days to the WSWCA Executive Committee, whose disposition shall be final.