

City of Columbia Parks and Recreation

Community Garden Rules, Regulations, and Expectations

Office Phone: 803.545.3100 | **Fax:** 803.343.8744

Website: <http://Columbiasc.gov>

1. Introduction:

The City of Columbia's Community Garden Lease Program offers residents the opportunity to grow fresh food, promote sustainability, and build community connections. Located in **Planting Zone 8a**, our program allows year-round gardening.

- **One** 4' x 20' garden plot
- Access to water hoses and a municipal water supply
- A space to connect with fellow gardeners and cultivate fresh produce

Whether you're a beginner or experienced gardener, this program offers a rewarding way to grow your own food while contributing to a vibrant gardening community.

2. Program Guidelines and Expectations

The Parks and Recreation Department has established the following guidelines to ensure the program's success, fairness, and a positive experience for all participants. It is important to read and understand these rules to fully understand what is expected of you as a participant.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the **Community Garden Coordinator** for support.

The following rules, regulations, and expectations apply to all community garden participants.

3. How to Join the Community Garden Program

- Obtain a garden plot assignment
- Complete the lease agreement
- Pay the required garden fee
- Follow all community garden rules and regulations
- Maintain compliance with program expectations

Community Garden Locations

- NOMA - 2700 River Drive, Columbia, SC 29203
- Leroy Moss Multipurpose Center at Hyatt Park- 941 Jackson Ave, Columbia, SC 29203

4. Year-Round Gardening Requirements

- Columbia, South Carolina, is in **Planting Zone 8a**, allowing for year-round gardening.
- Gardeners must **actively maintain their plots** in all seasons, including winter.
- Leaving a plot unplanted is **not permitted**.
- Plots that are not maintained may be **reassigned** to someone on the waiting list.

5. Active Gardener Responsibilities

All community gardeners are expected to:

- Follow all garden rules and regulations
- Maintain their plot year-round
- Respect fellow gardeners and shared spaces
- Respond to communication from the Garden Coordinator
- Ensure their plot does not become overgrown or neglected
- Update emergency contact information if changes occur

6. Registration & Renewal Process

- **March 1-14:** Returning gardeners may renew their plots.
- **March 15-31:** Any unclaimed plots will be offered to those on the waiting list.
- **April 1:** The gardening season officially begins.

7. Garden Rules & Guidelines

Garden Hours

Gardens are open from **sunup to sundown**.

Water Availability & Freezing Conditions

- Water will be **turned off when temperatures fall below 32°F** to prevent pipe damage.
- If freezing temperatures persist, water will remain off for **24-48 hours after temperatures rise**.
- Report any leaks to the Parks and Recreation Department at **803.545.3100**.

Security & Access Codes

- Gardeners will receive a **gate access code at the start of the season**.
- **Do not share gate codes** with non-gardeners.
- **Always close and lock the gate** when entering and leaving.
- Contact the Garden Coordinator for **assistance with access**.

Process for Reporting Issues

- Call the **Community Garden Coordinator**
- Email **Jacqueline.Williams@columbiasc.gov**
- Contact the **Parks & Recreation Office at 803.545.3100**

Waste & Recycling

- Dispose of all trash properly.
- Use designated roll carts for garbage—**yard waste may not be placed in them.**
- **Compost is available** at 127 Humane Lane off Shop Road.

8. Garden Maintenance & Visit Expectations

Proximity & Regular Visits

- Gardeners should live close enough to visit their plots regularly.
- Failure to maintain a plot can result in reassignment without refund.

Recommended Visit Frequency Per Season

- **Spring & Summer (March–August):** At least **2–3 times per week** for watering, weeding, and harvesting.
- **Fall & Winter (September–February):** At least **once per week** to maintain winter crops.

Weed Control & Cleanliness

- **Plots must be kept weed-free** to prevent spread to neighboring plots.
- **Regularly remove weeds** before they go to seed.
- **Overgrown plots will receive a warning.**
- **Gardeners have two weeks to correct the issue before reassignment.**

Tool & Supply Storage

- Store tools neatly inside your plot when not in use.
- **Do not leave bags of mulch, soil, or fertilizer outside the plot.**
- Personal tools left outside designated areas may be removed by Parks staff.

Policy on Plant Selection & Prohibited Plants

- Gardeners may plant vegetables, herbs, fruits, and flowers.
- Illegal plants are strictly prohibited.
- Avoid planting invasive species that may spread beyond the plot.
- **Tall crops should not shade neighboring plots.**

9. Signature Page & Payment Instructions

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read, understand, and agree to abide by the Community Garden Rules, Regulations, and Expectations.

Community Gardener's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Plot #: _____

Payment Instructions:

Make check or money order payable to:

City of Columbia - Parks and Recreation

Mail or submit in person at:

City of Columbia - Parks and Recreation

1111 Recreation Drive

Columbia, SC 29203

How to Contact Us

Community Garden Coordinator: Jacqueline Williams

Email: Jacqueline.Williams@columbiasc.gov

Landline: 803.545.3957

Parks & Recreation Office: 803.545.3100

Thank You for Being a Part of Our Gardening Community!

Your participation helps create a thriving, green community. We appreciate your commitment to sustainable gardening and look forward to seeing your garden flourish!

Need Assistance?

If you have any questions or need assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the Community Garden Coordinator for support.