

# ORANGE COUNTY CEMETERY DISTRICT

## RULES AND REGULATIONS

### FLOWERS – DECORATIONS – MEMORIAL MARKERS

Our District's cemeteries are designed to create a park like setting made beautiful by lovely trees and the sweep of green lawns. This is accomplished by placing markers flush with the surface of the ground and allowing nothing to interfere with the natural surface or contour of the lawn.

The placement of flowers and memorial markers on the interment space of our loved ones is both a time-honored tradition and a beautiful expression of love and remembrance. To retain the park like setting for all and to provide that this setting can be maintained economically and with uniformity, certain rules must be followed. **Any items in violation of this flower policy can and will be removed and discarded at any time.**

#### FLOWERS AND ORNAMENTS

1. Gravesites may **only** be decorated with three items. These items may include any combination of the following: approved in-ground flower vases installed by cemetery staff; temporary plastic cone vases provided by the cemetery; any other decoration that does not exceed 21” in height or 12” in width. Temporary plastic cone vases are located near the water faucets and trash cans and are also available at the cemetery office. Only latex balloons are allowed if they are securely fastened to a vase or other decoration. Decorations must be placed either on the marker or immediately below the marker and should not extend more than 12” from the bottom of the marker.
2. Unless it is an observed Holiday as listed in Item 3 below, **every Wednesday, Cemetery Staff will conduct a full park clean-up. ALL ITEMS ON GRAVESITES WILL BE DISCARDED. The Cemetery Clean-up Schedule is also available on the District website at: [www.occemeterydistrict.com](http://www.occemeterydistrict.com).**

**In addition, if there is a birthday or anniversary of the person interred, then the family may obtain a “Do Not Remove Flower” sign from the office so that the flowers may be left on the interment space for an additional week. Staff will verify that there is a birthday or anniversary date before a “Do Not Remove Flower” sign will be provided. Please note: Orange County Vector Control requires that the water in all vases be emptied weekly.**

3. In honor of the following Federal holidays, staff will only conduct light clean-ups where the only items discarded are flowers that are obviously wilted. All other decorations will be left in place. Even during holiday periods, only three items are allowed on gravesites as described in Item 1.
  - Memorial Day
  - Independence Day
  - Veterans Day
  - Thanksgiving
  - Christmas

In honor of the following non-Federal holidays, staff will only conduct light clean-ups where the only items discarded are flowers that are obviously wilted. All other decorations will be left in place. Even during holiday periods, only three items are allowed on gravesites as described in Item 1, except for the construction of ofrendas during Dia de los Muertos (see note).

- Valentines Day
- Mother's Day
- Father's Day
- Halloween/Dia de los Muertos\*

\* During Dia de los Muertos, families are allowed to create ofrendas on gravesites, however, no fencing is allowed and the construction of ofrendas should not infringe on neighboring gravesites. Ofrendas should not impede the ability of cemetery staff to mow gravesites. Small mementos and photos may be included in the ofrendas.

4. **Do not leave items of great sentimental or monetary value, as cemetery staff cannot secure these items. The District is NOT responsible for items that are lost or stolen. The District is NOT responsible for items that are discarded by District Staff on scheduled cemetery clean-up days or for items that are discarded by District Staff because they are in violation of this flower/decoration policy.**
5. No person other than District employees or persons acting under the direction of the General Manager shall plant trees, shrubs, flowers, ground covering or plants of any type in any part of the cemetery.
6. No ornaments, objects, or decorations of any kind may be attached to trees, shrubs, or on any cemetery landscaping or hardscape.
7. **Gravesites cannot be outlined or fenced in any manner.** DO NOT line markers or gravesites with loose stones, or any type of rocks, wood chips and fencing. Rocks and wood chips can become dangerous projectiles when mowing occurs. **Any loose stones, rocks, wood chips or fencing found on gravesites will be immediately removed and discarded.** Do not trim the grass or trench to outline a gravesite.
8. No open flame candles of any type are allowed. Only solar or battery-operated light will be allowed.
9. Glass receptacles are not allowed. Do not leave items on the gravesite or in the niche areas that are breakable or fragile in nature.
10. Mowing and maintenance occur throughout the week as the interment schedule allows, not just on full park clean-up days. Staff has the right to move gravesite decorations at any time in order to mow, trim, conduct interments, and complete other cemetery maintenance. Staff will make every effort to return gravesite decorations and flowers to their original positions but may not always be able to return items exactly as they were found.
11. If you remove items before a Wednesday clean-up, **please do not return items to the gravesite until Thursday morning.** This will help staff mow and trim markers more efficiently when less items are on the gravesites. We appreciate your cooperation in this request.
12. After a funeral service, all flower arrangements and decorations of any kind may be left on the interment space. Staff may discard these items three days from the date of the interment.
13. Please do not adhere tape, stickers, glue or other adhesives to the face of niches. Only niche vases should be used. No glass receptacles are allowed in the niche areas.
14. Temporary vases are available near faucets and trash cans for your convenience. Only THREE vases are allowed per gravesite.

## **\*MEMORIAL MARKERS**

1. No lot or space shall be defined by any architectural object or by any marker unless approved by the General Manager, his designee or other person authorized by the Board of Trustees.
2. **All markers must be placed flush with the surface of the ground. The District no longer allows upright monuments.** (The only exception is if the District has already approved the area for new upright markers.)
3. Flat markers shall be set flush and level with the ground and shall be installed by District employees or those acting under direction of district staff.
4. Only one marker shall be permitted on each space. Any exception must be approved by the General Manager or his designee prior to installation.
5. Only approved granite, marble or bronze markers with square, smooth edges will be accepted. Bronze markers will require payment for the placement of a cement base to support the bronze marker.
6. No marker with lettering, emblems, borders or other designs raised more than 3/8" above the surface of the marker will be accepted.
7. If you are placing a picture on a marker, the family must sign a "Waiver of Damages to Photographs" form and deliver or mail it to the District prior to the delivery of the marker. The District will not set a marker with a picture if the waiver has not been completed and submitted. Photos can become loose and separate from the marker and be damaged by equipment. Neither the Cemetery District nor its employees are responsible for photos which become loose and damaged. Markers designed for a photo tile will not be accepted by the cemetery unless the photo tile has been properly adhered to the marker by the marker company prior to delivery.
8. The District no longer allows cement borders around any markers and the District does not accept markers with cement borders from marker companies. (The only exception is for families who have already pre-paid for a cement border.) Families interested in a border are encouraged to order a faux or etched border from the marker company at the time of placing order.
9. Approved markers shall be limited in size as follows:
  - A) Single, double-depth, multiple or companion interment space markers shall be no larger than 16"x28"x3" unless approved in advance by the Cemetery Manager.
  - B) Baby Section grave markers shall be no larger than 16"x28"x3".
  - C) Markers for the Los Alisos urn garden at El Toro Memorial Park shall be bronze and no larger than 8"x12". Markers for all other urn gardens shall be no larger than 24"x12" and may be bronze, granite or marble.
10. Approved bronze niche plates shall be 5"x3" with a 1/4" raised polished border. The thickness of a bronze niche plate may not exceed 1/4". Only approved bronze niche plates may be adhered to the face of a niche. Only cemetery staff are authorized to install approved bronze niche plates.
11. Once a marker or niche plate is delivered, District staff will verify that the marker or niche plate setting fee has been paid, and that the lot owner has provided written consent for the marker or niche plate installation by completing the Marker Purchase Acknowledgment form. Staff will make every effort set the marker or niche within 15 to 30 business days.

\*Pursuant to Section 9052(d) of the California Health and Safety Code, it is unlawful for any employee or officer of the cemetery district to engage in the selling of monuments and markers.