

TOWN OF PLYMOUTH  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS  
CEMETERY & CREMATORY DIVISION  
RULES AND REGULATIONS  
UPDATED: JULY 2023

Cemetery & Crematory Office  
Vine Hills Cemetery  
102 Samoset Street  
Plymouth, MA 02360  
(508) 830-4078  
(508) 830-4141 - FAX

Office Hours:

Cemetery & Crematory: M-F 7:00 am - 3:30 pm

The town of Plymouth, Massachusetts welcomes visitors to its cemeteries. Visitors are asked to remember that the cemeteries are dedicated to the memory of those buried there and that dignified behavior is required.

TOWN OF PLYMOUTH  
RULES REGARDING PURCHASE OF BURIAL LOT(S)

As the owner(s) of a lot(s) in a Town of Plymouth owned cemetery, you are asked to sign below indicating you understand the following and that you have received a complete copy of the Cemetery Rules and Regulations:

- Only one upright headstone per deed is allowed. Flat markers may be added as needed.
- Shepherd's hooks, windchimes, trinkets, curbing, shrubs, fencing, hedging, borders, mounds of dirt, mulch, and loose stones are not allowed. Glass items (vases, bottles, etc.) are not allowed on graves. See safety compliance memo for more information.
- No planting of trees or shrubs.
- Benches are not allowed except when used as and in place of a headstone.
- Vigil lights and spotlights are not allowed.
- No bird baths or birdfeeders are allowed.
- Nothing is to be placed in or attached to trees.
- Flowers may be planted 1 foot in front of or beside the headstone. Nothing may be placed behind the headstone.
- Christmas decorations must be removed by March 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Once the headstone is set the temporary marker from the funeral home will be removed.
- The superintendent may remove any item in the way of maintenance without notice.

*Your signature indicates you acknowledge the above rules and understand that the Cemetery staff will remove any of the items listed.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lot Owner

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lot Owner

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cemetery Division Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## GENERAL RULES

1. Residency of the Town of Plymouth is not a requirement to purchase graves under the jurisdiction of the Town of Plymouth. However, there are different rates for non residents. See attached schedule for fee. Payment in full at the time of purchase is required via check, cash or money order. Credit cards are not currently accepted. No lots shall be sold without perpetual care. **NOTE: As of 2022 lots are being sold only when there has been a death. In addition, a maximum of only 2 graves may be purchased.**
2. The transfer or sale of the right of burial of any grave or lot must be approved by the cemetery superintendent. No lots or graves may be sold by the deed holder or their heirs to any other person without the cemetery division's consent. The sale amount cannot exceed the original amount tendered. Before any transfer, sale or claim of ownership will be approved and processed, absolute ownership must be established. Duplicate deeds or transfers will be issued by the cemetery division for a fee. (see fee schedule)
3. Chapter 114, Section 29: If anyone dies intestate, the lot descends to the heirs-at-law, but subject to provisions of chapter 190, Section 3.
4. Chapter 114, Section 3A: The cemetery may take over ownership of an unoccupied grave after seventy-five years has elapsed since the date of sale and after making a diligent search to locate heirs.
5. The town does not buy back previously sold graves. If for some reason this does occur, per Massachusetts law, graves will only be bought back for the amount paid at purchase.
6. All work in the cemeteries is to be done only by cemetery employees or under their direction with exception of the lettering or setting of monuments or markers which will be the responsibility of the company hired to do the work. No outside paid gardener or landscaper will be allowed to do work within the cemeteries without permission from the cemetery superintendent. No work is to be done in the cemeteries on Sundays.

7. The Cemetery Division will exercise reasonable care to protect all monuments, markers or plantings, while mowing grass or doing other maintenance tasks, however, it disclaims any responsibility for any damage or injury thereto.
8. Permission must be obtained from the cemetery superintendent for any work contemplated in the cemetery such as cutting in new sod, flowerbeds, planting of trees or otherwise disturbing the grounds.
9. Placing curbing, fencing, hedging, borders, mounds or enclosures of any kind on or around any lot or grave is strictly prohibited. No upright markers are allowed other than a headstone. Planting of trees or shrubs is not allowed. Planting of perennial or annual flowers is permissible within a 12" area in front of the headstone and no wider than the headstone.
10. Acting in the best interest of the Town, the superintendent shall have the authority to cut, trim, transplant or remove anything that interferes with grounds maintenance tasks, someone else's lot or gives the appearance of an unkept lot wherever or whenever he shall deem necessary.
11. The Cemetery Division will not be liable for any loss or damages caused by an act of God, thieves, vandals, or unavoidable accidents.
12. Dogs and pets are not permitted on the cemetery grounds.
13. Any photography or videography in the cemeteries requires the permission of the cemetery office.
14. All cemeteries are open from dawn to dusk.
15. Christmas decorations must be removed by March 1<sup>st</sup>. The cemetery division will remove and discard items after that date.

## **PROHIBITED ITEMS**

The following items are prohibited: vigil lights, spotlights, vases, balloons, benches, string lights, signs, garden flags, bird houses, and bird feeders. For staff safety no glass items, shepherd's hooks or loose stones are allowed (see safety compliance memo attached). Nothing is to be attached to any tree or shrub. No flag, pennant, or similar decoration, except the flag of the United States shall be displayed on any lot or grave. Upright articles are only allowed within a 12" area in front of headstone. Items are not to be placed at the foot or corners of graves. All items are to be placed in a 12" area in front of the headstone only. Stone rubbing is not allowed.

## **INTERMENTS**

1. All requests for interments must be received no later than the end of business (3:30) Monday thru Friday three days prior to the day requested. Exceptions will be a request for a Monday interment which must be received no later than 11:00 am on the previous Thursday. The cost of interments is available at the Cemetery office. Note there will be an additional charge when snow or frost removal is required. (see fee schedule)
2. All burial requests must be received in writing from the Funeral Director and/or the family and signed by the owner, legal representative or heir of the lot making the request. The Cemetery Division is not responsible for any mistakes occurring from lack of precise and proper instructions as to interments. A signed interment order must be given to the cemetery office before grave opening will begin.
3. Interment fees must be paid for in advance or by the Funeral Director at the time of the interment and be accompanied by the burial permit. (see fee schedule)

4. No burials will be scheduled on Sundays or holidays except in cases of public health emergencies. Saturday burials will incur an overtime rate as will burials scheduled after 1:00 pm.
5. Any requests for disinterments must come from a licensed funeral director.
6. Each single grave may contain one full coffin burial and two urns or three urns when there is no coffin present or planned. The exception is lots that are deemed cremation only. Each single lot is 3'4" x 10'.
7. All full burial interments shall have a cement vault with a one-piece cover. Cremation burials do not require a vault but must be in a reasonable container.
8. Scattering of cremated remains is not allowed in the cemeteries.
9. All cemeteries under town control are for the interment of human remains only. Remains of animals are not allowed to be interred or scattered.

## **FOUNDATIONS**

1. All monuments, headstones and markers must have a foundation poured by the Cemetery Division.
2. No foundation will be poured from May 15<sup>th</sup> to June 1<sup>st</sup> of any year due to Memorial Day preparation or from October 15<sup>th</sup> to April 1<sup>st</sup> due to ground conditions. Foundations will be poured in the order in which they are received.
3. Payment to cover the cost of the foundation must accompany the order or no foundation will be poured. The cost of the foundation will be determined by square footage. (see fee schedule)
4. Setting fee for markers not requiring a foundation is \$100.00. Government issued veteran markers are installed free of charge.

5. The cemetery does not accept delivery of headstones other than government markers. Deliveries from online stone dealers will not be accepted, nor will the cemetery division be responsible for setting them.
6. Once a headstone is set the temporary marker provided by the funeral home will be removed.

### **PERPETUAL CARE**

Perpetual care covers the grounds maintenance tasks of the cemeteries, including lawn mowing, loaming and seeding after an interment, leaf removal, trash removal, and snow removal from the main roads, but does not include care of any kind of the monuments, headstones or markers.

### **MONUMENTS**

1. One upright monument is allowed per deed. Individual graves may be marked with flush markers. The size of the monument will be determined by the amount of lots purchased. No monument will exceed 3' in height. Both die and base must be of the same material. All upright markers shall have foundations. There is no limit to the number of flat (flush to the ground) markers allowed.
2. Monuments must be centered on the lot.
3. Benches are prohibited except in place of a headstone.
4. Designs and colors for all monuments, headstones and markers must be approved by the Cemetery Division.
5. Certain historical sections have color restrictions in which any monument must match surrounding area stones.
6. Foundation base sizes for monuments or headstones:

Single Grave	24" x 12"
Double Grave	36" x 12"
Three Grave	36" x 12"
Four Grave	48" x 24"
Five or more	contact office

## **CREMATORY**

Cremation will take place only after the following conditions have been met.

1. Any scheduled ceremonies or viewings have been completed.
2. Forty-eight hours have transpired since the death occurred.
3. Civil and medical authorities have issued all required permits. A completed death certificate or informant verification form and attestation, signed medical examiner's form, burial transit permit and signed family authority must accompany each case.
4. All financial obligations have been met to Vine Hills and the medical examiner prior to cremation.
5. Unless embalmed, the deceased must be placed in a pouch.
6. Containers must be composed of ridged materials suitable for cremation (no metal caskets accepted), have a wooden bottom, be resistant to leakage and be able to be closed and completely cover the human remains contained within.
7. All pacemakers and radioactive devices must be removed prior to cremation by funeral directors or medical personnel. They will not be removed by Vine Hills staff.
8. Cases will not be opened for families without the funeral director present.
9. Cases will not be accepted without all proper and complete paperwork and payment.



## **LOT AND BURIAL FEES**

Grave Lots - residents ..... \$1200.00  
(per single grave; includes perpetual care)  
Grave lots-non resident (eligibility TBD).\$2400.00  
Deed Transfer Fee ..... \$150.00

### **Opening & Closing Fees**

(no burials on Sundays & certain holidays)

Full Burials Monday-Friday ..... \$1200.00  
Full Burials Saturdays/Holidays ..... \$1500.00  
Cremate Burials Monday-Friday ..... \$350.00  
Cremate Burials Saturdays/Holidays ..... \$475.00  
Infant Full Burials Monday-Friday ..... \$250.00  
Infant Full Burials Saturdays/Holidays ... \$375.00  
Infant Cremate Burials Monday-Friday ..... \$100.00  
Infant Cremate Burials Saturday/Holidays . \$200.00  
Winter Rates Cremates ..... +\$100.00  
Winter Rates Full Burials ..... +\$250.00  
(winter rates apply to December 1st - April 1st)

## **CREMATION FEES**

Adult ..... \$300.00  
Child (3-10 years) ..... \$100.00  
Infant/Stillborn (up to 3 years) ..... \$0.00  
Casket cremation. . . . . \$550.00  
Holding Fee per day (discretionary) ..... \$100.00  
Viewing Room Rental ..... \$75.00  
Cremation Containers ..... \$35.00  
Pouches ..... \$25.00  
Pre Need Cremation Vouchers. . . . . \$300.00

## **FOUNDATIONS FEES**

Foundation charge is \$150.00 per square foot. Setting fee for markers not requiring a foundation is \$100.00. No charge for installation of government made veteran markers.

***Fees Subject to Change***