



RULES - 2025

The Portsmouth Community Garden strives to be a safe place for gardeners, guests and children. Please do not bring anything to the garden that will compromise the safety of those enjoying the garden. The primary goal of these rules is to ensure an enjoyable gardening experience for all. Please observe the rules of the garden and be a good neighbor!

Community Volunteer Time

Community Volunteer Time is crucial to the success of the Portsmouth Community Garden! These days, held on Thursday evenings and Sunday afternoons from April through October, focus on the common areas of the garden. As a garden member, expect to commit to at least two volunteer sessions throughout the garden season. Gardeners can sign up for their sessions on our website through Sign-Up Genius. We will also offer other independent volunteer opportunities that can be completed at a time that works for your schedule.

New Member Orientation

All **new members** must commit to attending one Orientation Session, to be held at the garden. These sessions will be brief, and will go through the ins and outs of the garden.

Rules

- All plots must be planted by June 15, or your bed could be forfeited. **Even if you do not plant your bed until June, you are responsible for weeding your bed starting May 1.**
- **Please keep your plants contained within your garden bed.** Tall plants should be planted in the center of your bed so that they do not shade neighbors' beds.
- Generally, plan to visit your plot *at least* once a week for watering and weeding. (note that in hot dry times, you may need to water more frequently than that.)
- Each gardener is responsible for **keeping the walkways around their beds free of all litter, debris, weeds, and sprawling plants.**
- Each gardener will have access to the tool shed. Please keep the **garden tool shed neat and clean.** If you choose to use the communal tools, make sure they are hosed down, cleaned, and placed back in the shed in the appropriate place.
- The Community Garden is a carry-in, carry-out space. **Please take all trash home with you.**
- Please check the white board in the shed for any updates, news and independent volunteer opportunities.
- Prevent weeds before they get started. Mulch around your plants by covering all exposed soil with free mulch like leaves, pine needles, dry grass clippings, seaweed, or compost. Please do not use wood chips or bark mulch in beds as these options will not break down in a timely manner. Landscape fabric for weed suppression is not allowed.
- The Portsmouth Community Garden pays for water usage. **Please be aware of your water usage and avoid being wasteful!** After you are done watering, turn water faucets off. Notify the coordinator of any leaks in the water lines. **Please keep the hoses empty of water and neatly rolled up.**

- If you are unable to care for your plot for an extended time due to illness or vacation, please ask a fellow gardener or the coordinator to help during your absence.
- Not all insects are bad and many are beneficial to our gardens. If you don't know what the insect is, please ask others. For insects that cause significant damage, please hand pick them off the plants and drop them in a bucket of water.
- **HERBICIDES** and **PESTICIDES** are not allowed within the Portsmouth Community Garden. Refer to "resources" on the website for tips on organic gardening practices. Thank you for following this rule!
- Please harvest crops when ready. Do not leave produce to rot on the vines. This attracts critters into the garden. If you have an overabundance, please share with others or place them in our **Gather Cooler**, located in front of the shed.
- At the end of the garden season, please "put your garden to bed" by completing the following:
 - Remove any diseased plants from the site (please don't compost them).
 - Cover any exposed soil with some type of mulch that will break down over the winter like leaves ,straw or pine needles. Do not use bark much or wood chips in the beds.
 - Remove any plants tags, trellis or stakes at the end of the season.
- Do not bring pets inside the garden. If you bring your pet to the parking lot, please remove all waste.
- **Please always keep gates closed to prevent woodchucks and other critters from getting into the garden.** When you enter or exit, PLEASE remember to close the gates.
- **If you are the last person in the garden, check and make sure all gates are locked.**
- Invasive perennials such as mint are prohibited in the garden.
- Please take any plant waste (weeds or diseased plants) home with you. Do not place them in the compost bin.

Rules Enforcement

The Portsmouth Community Garden's Board of Directors has the duty of enforcing rules and making decisions for the garden. They have the authority to resolve conflicts and dismiss gardeners for failure to follow the garden rules. Submit concerns via communitygarden603@gmail.com. Unresolved issues or disputes between gardeners will be referred to the Board.

- If a member does not keep up with their plot or continually violates the above rules of the garden, the member will be issued a warning by email from the Board of Directors. If the situation is not rectified within two weeks, they may have their plot revoked.
- The Portsmouth Community Garden shall not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, marital status, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, disability, or military status in its garden membership and the administration of its programs.

Sign here _____

Spell name here _____

Date _____

Signing this document signifies your agreement with the rules stated above.

Portsmouth Community Garden Waiver of Liability

We hope your gardening experience is safe and rewarding, but accidents can happen. The following waiver must be signed by all gardeners to protect the Portsmouth Community Garden from liability.

Waiver: In consideration of being permitted to participate in any way in the Portsmouth Community Garden I, for myself, my heirs, personal representatives or assigns, do hereby release, waive, discharge, and covenant not to sue Portsmouth Community Garden or its volunteers and agents from liability from any and all claims resulting in personal injury, accidents or illnesses (including death), and property loss arising from, but not limited to, participation in the Community Garden. (Initials _____).

Indemnification and Hold Harmless: I also agree to INDEMNIFY AND HOLD Portsmouth Community Garden and its employees, volunteers and agents HARMLESS from any and all claims, actions, suits, procedures, costs, expenses, damages and liabilities, including attorney's fees brought as a result of my involvement in the Community Garden and to reimburse them for any such expenses incurred (Initials _____).

Severability: The undersigned further expressly agrees that the foregoing waiver and assumption of risks agreement is intended to be as broad and inclusive as is permitted by the law of the State of Connecticut that if any portion thereof is held invalid, it is agreed that the balance shall, notwithstanding, continue in full legal force and effect (Initials _____).

Photo Release: I authorize Portsmouth Community Garden to use my photo in any manner Portsmouth Community Garden desires, for advertising, display, audio-visual, exhibition or editorial use (Initials _____).

Acknowledgment of Understanding: I have read this waiver of liability, fully understand its terms, and **understand that I am giving up substantial rights, including my right to sue.** I acknowledge that I am signing the agreement freely and voluntarily, and **intend by my signature to be a complete and unconditional release of all liability** to the greatest extent allowed by law.

Print Name

Signature

Date