

[Name] Community Garden Organization By-Laws

Article 1—Name and Structure

The name of this organization shall be the [insert garden organization name].

Article 2—Mission

The [name] Community Garden Organization shall be dedicated to supporting and operating recreational community gardens for the residents of COUNTY (“COUNTY”) for the promotion of education and sustainable, ornamental, and edible plant culture. The benefits of gardens are both providing a space to garden and improving the quality of life, stimulating social interaction among COUNTY residents, beautifying neighborhoods, producing food, preserving green space and providing opportunities for cross-cultural, multi-cultural, and inter-generational connections.

These sample by-laws are provided as an example framework for structuring your community garden organization and may be expanded upon according to the specific needs and circumstances of your organization.

Article 3—Registration and Fees

- a. Garden registration shall be for COUNTY households, for use by COUNTY residents, and shall be limited to one garden plot (“plot”) per household.
- b. Registration shall be available to any COUNTY resident that agrees to comply with these By-Laws and Operating Rules of the [garden organization] and all related rules, regulations, and ordinances adopted by the COUNTY (collectively “Registrants”).
- c. Plots shall be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis to Registrants for each annual gardening season, which shall be defined by the Operating Rules, as may be amended from time to time.
- d. A new waiting list of applicants, who were not assigned Plots, shall be maintained for each Season.
- e. Registration Fees (“Fees”) shall be set annually, and must be paid in full at the time of registration. In the event that all Plots have not been assigned or a Plot is abandoned by a Registrant, and in the event that there is no waiting list of applicants, County residents may apply to register during the Season.

Article 4 – Membership

- a. Members must be at least 18 years old. Anyone under 18 shall require parental permission to garden.
- b. Registrants automatically shall become members of the [garden organization] (“Members/Gardeners”).
- c. Each Member shall be entitled to one vote in matters concerning revisions to the By-Laws and Operating Rules, and other matters put before [garden organization] membership for approval.
- d. Each Member annually shall donate a minimum amount of volunteer time, as specified in the Operating Rules, to the [garden organization] to ensure its viability by helping with [garden organization] projects and maintenance of the garden. Members with specialized skills, experience, or interests should notify the Executive Committee.
- e. The [garden organization] shall not discriminate based on race, creed, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, marital status, age, sect, sexual orientation, or disability in the administration of its programs.

Article 5—Executive Committee

The [name] Community Garden Organization shall maintain an Executive Committee consisting of, at minimum, the following volunteer positions. The Executive Committee shall be elected annually from the community garden membership.

Chairperson – Sets the agenda, directs and maintains order at Executive Committee meetings.

Secretary – Records meeting minutes at Executive Committee meetings and general meetings; coordinates general garden communications; keeps up-to-date membership forms; maintains a ledger of active gardeners and registration waiting list.

Treasurer – Establishes annual budget, collects registration revenue, maintains records of expenditures, reconciles monthly revenues and expenditures; maintains fund balance; and reports annually to the garden members and the COUNTY.

Site Coordinator – Organizes workdays in the garden; coordinates signing and renewal of plot rental agreements; assigns plots to waiting list registrants and orients new gardeners to the garden rules; coordinates and records garden issues; coordinates waste removal from the garden; serves as liaison between gardeners, Executive Committee, and COUNTY staff, is responsible for duties assigned to the Tool and Compost Coordinator if alternative volunteer positions have not been assigned.

Alternative Volunteer Positions

- a. *Tool Coordinator* – Ensures that equipment is properly maintained and updates inventory report annually; makes recommendations for tool purchases to be funded from the treasury; organizes activities on workdays for tool maintenance and repair.
- b. *Compost Coordinator* – Ensures that the compost area is properly maintained; orients new gardeners to compost procedures; and organizes activities on workdays for compost maintenance and processing.

Article 6 – Organization Meetings

- a. In addition to the Annual General Meeting, a second General Meeting shall be held during the planting season at a date established by the Executive Committee. Additional General Meetings may be scheduled by the Executive Committee. All General Meetings shall be scheduled at a place and time determined by the Executive Committee, and shall be publicized and open to all Members and to the general public.
- b. Decisions of the Executive Committee shall require a simple majority of the Executive Committee present, at any Executive Committee meeting, as long as a quorum comprised of a majority of the Executive Committee is present.
- c. At General Meetings, decisions shall be made by a simple majority of the Members present. When the place and time of a General Meeting is announced to Members with at least two weeks prior notice, no fixed quorum is required. When less than two weeks notice is given, a quorum shall consist of at least one-third of the Members.

Article 7 – Amendments

These By-Laws of the [garden organization] may be amended at any General Meeting when approved by two-thirds of the members present. Prior to the vote, notice of the changes, along with a copy of the changes, shall be provided to Members a minimum of two weeks prior to the meeting at which the vote shall be taken. The amendments shall be read to members before the close of the meeting.

No amendment of the By-Laws shall become effective until two weeks after ratification by the Executive Committee and communication to all [garden organization] members.

The Operating Rules of [name] Community Garden Organization may be amended at a meeting of the Executive Committee when approved by a majority of the Committee’s members. Prior to the vote, notice of the changes, along with a copy of the changes, shall be provided to members a minimum of two weeks prior to the meeting at which the Executive Committee vote shall be taken.

No amendment of the Operating Rules shall become effective until two weeks after ratification by the Executive Committee and communication by email to all [garden organization] members.

Article 8 – Standing Rules

- a. All [garden organization] expenses shall be pre-approved by the Executive Committee. Receipts shall be submitted for any reimbursement.
- b. The [garden organization] accounts and expenses shall be presented to Executive Committee and general membership at the year-end meeting.
- c. All records of the [garden organization] shall be available to the COUNTY.