

Columbia Gardeners, Inc. Rules and Regulations

(Approved by the Board of Columbia Gardeners Inc. on October 14, 2025)

Columbia Gardeners, Inc. is an all-volunteer non-profit organization. We count on everyone to pitch in to make our community gardens successful. In order to ensure a pleasant experience for all, the following rules apply:

1. Plot license period extends from February 1 to January 31 of the following year. Each gardener is responsible for contributing 4 hours of member service per plot by October. There are ample opportunities to share your expertise for the service. Be sure to notify your site manager or service hour coordinator as you complete approved service activities.
2. Plots are licensed with the intention that space will be well utilized and maintained. Garden plots are for personal noncommercial use. Plots (and plot borders) must be tended regularly. Weeds may not be taller than 12" in height. Smaller weeds may not cover over 50% of the plot. All poison ivy and poison hemlock** must be removed. Plots must be weeded before April 15. Plots should be tilled, dug, or planted by May 15. Untended plots may be repossessed by Columbia Gardeners following written notice. No refund will be given. Any and all equipment remaining on the plot may be disposed of by Columbia Gardeners. Gardeners who have lost a plot for non-compliance at one site will not be permitted to obtain a plot at another site.
3. Please conserve water. Watering is limited to 30 minutes, unless no other gardeners are waiting. Watering is by hand-held hose, drip-hose, or soaker-hose only; no sprinklers are permitted. Gardeners must be present in their plots when watering. Always leave one faucet available when there are gardeners who are watering with a bucket or watering can. Gardeners' hose and nozzle should be in good repair and not leak.
4. No permanent garden structures are permitted. Unsightly sheds or other structures are not permitted. Fences made of garden fencing materials are permitted to control animal pests and must be kept in good repair. Snow fencing and deer netting are not allowed. Plot marking stakes may not be relocated. (Additional rules* apply for Elkhorn II and Long Reach II sites.)
5. Garden plots and paths must be kept orderly and free of hazards, trash, clutter or harmful/noxious material. (i.e., garden tools /equipment and pesticides). Nothing should protrude from a plot onto a path. Gardeners should weed along their fences.
6. All pets must be leashed in accordance with county ordinance.
7. Refuse and recyclables must be removed from plots and taken home for disposal. There is no trash removal or recycling service at the garden. Compost bins are for garden plant material only.
8. We encourage passing along the tradition of gardening. Children are welcome in the garden but should be accompanied by an adult and must be supervised at all times.
9. Gardeners should be considerate and respectful of their neighbors. Avoid planting, or carefully manage, plants that grow tall or spread by seed or root. Such plants may not be grown along the fence line. No woody vegetation (such as trees and most shrubs) may be grown. Any "volunteer" trees and shrubs must be removed. Cannabis may not be grown. Do not spray on windy days and keep all spray within your own plot; access and harvest only from your own plot. Animal-based fertilizers and waste must be composted before they are added to the garden.
10. No gardening practices or behaviors that adversely affect health and safety or detract from the gardening experience of fellow gardeners are allowed. The use of fire in any form is not allowed. Gardeners may be required to remove any material or structures if they are providing shelter to rodents or other pests.
11. Neither Columbia Gardeners, Inc. nor Howard County nor the Columbia Association will be liable for injuries that may be incurred at the garden, nor do they assume responsibility for losses due to vandalism or theft.
12. Gardeners are responsible for maintaining a current mailing address on file with their site manager or designated database manager. If your mailing address and/or email address change, please be sure to notify the site manager and/or plot assignment manager with new contact information.

Failure to follow the rules may result in repossession or non-renewal of the plot next season.

We hope you will have an enjoyable and bountiful gardening year.

**Please see information in the attached Poison Hemlock Notice on how to remove poison hemlock safely.

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***Additional rules for Elkhorn II and Long Reach II:**

13. Organic gardening is required.

14. No individual perimeter plot fences are permitted. Trellises and plant stakes not taller than 6 ft. are allowed. Use untreated wood for stakes, trellises and raised beds.

15. Only non-woody annual plants that will not exceed 14' at mature height will be allowed. (No woody plants in gardens.)

16. Gardeners are required to weed the path between their plot and the perimeter fence and to the center of any shared paths adjacent to their plots. Elkhorn II gardeners are required to mulch shared paths and adjacent perimeter.

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