



# Rules & Regulations — of the — Cemetery Commission

These Rules and Regulations are promulgated under the authority of Mass. General Laws Chapter 114, Section 23. They shall apply, unless otherwise noted, to all cemeteries operated by the Freetown Cemetery Commission.

## I. General Rules

- a. **Hours.** Cemeteries are open from 7:00 a.m. until sunset. During Daylight Savings Time, the cemeteries shall close at 7:00 p.m.
- b. **Snow & Ice.** During winter months, visitors enter the cemeteries at their own risk when roads are covered with snow and ice.
- c. **Operation of Motor Vehicles.** The speed limit on all cemetery roads is 15 MPH. Automobiles, pick-up trucks, hearses, limousines, and bicycles are the only vehicles permitted in the cemeteries. Farm vehicles may pass through the East Freetown Cemetery where rights-of-way are in effect.
- d. **Garbage.** Disposing of household garbage within the cemeteries shall be considered fineable littering.
- e. **Dogs.** Dogs are prohibited within the cemeteries at all times, other than "seeing eye" dogs.
- f. **Alcohol.** Alcohol is not permitted within the cemeteries at any time.
- g. **Limits of Liability.** The Town will take every reasonable precaution to protect the private property of lot and grave owners within each cemetery from loss or damage, but it disclaims all responsibility for loss or damage from causes beyond its control, especially from the acts of thieves and vandals, and from Acts of God. Due to the age and terrain of the town's cemeteries, they have many inherent hazards. Entry upon cemetery grounds is the acceptance of these risks, releasing the Town of Freetown from any and all liability and/or claims.

## II. Sales of Lots & Burials

- a. **Dimensions.** A single casket grave shall measure five feet wide and ten feet long. These general proportions shall be maintained for lots consisting of multiple graves. A cremation-only lot shall be five feet square for every two urns.
- b. **Marking of Lots.** All lots shall be marked with a flat or upright headstone within six months of purchase, unless an extension is granted by the

Cemetery Commission. Corner posts must be made of a permanent material, set at ground level, and be installed at the same time as the headstone. The Cemetery Commission shall not be responsible for locating lots which are not properly marked.

- c. **Funerals & Interments.** Funerals may begin no earlier than 9:00 a.m., and may end no later than 5:00 p.m. No services may be conducted at the Assonet Burying Ground after 11:00 a.m. on July 3rd, nor before 1:00 p.m. on July 4th.

All interments must be arranged by a licensed undertaker who is responsible for notifying the Cemetery Commission at least 72 hours before any interment takes place. The Cemetery Commission shall not be responsible for the preparation of the cemetery if this notice is not given as required.

- d. **Vaults.** All interments shall be in a permanent container such as cement or bronze vaults or in a concrete sectional vault.
- e. **Assignment of Burial Space.** An individual owning multiple graves may assign those graves to others by completing a Burial Rights form, which may be obtained from the Cemetery Commission.

The Cemetery Commission may, at its discretion, choose to assign lots sequentially in any section or cemetery.

- f. **Resale of Lots.** Anyone owning and wishing to sell a cemetery lot must sell it back to the Town. The person selling will be paid what they originally paid for the lot, not including perpetual care, and the Town will resell at the prevailing price. This shall apply to graves originally sold by the Town on or after October 1, 2007.

- g. **Gravediggers.** No person may dig graves without a license from the Cemetery Commission. All licensees shall maintain insurance as required.

## III. Decorations

- a. **Flags.** American flags placed on the graves of veterans, and markers for holding such flags, are under the sole care and custody of the Veterans' Graves Officer, and shall not be moved or removed except under his guidance and direction.
- b. **Plantings.** Shrubs should never exceed the height of the stone. Live flowers and small plants may be planted within twelve inches of the gravestone.
- c. **Temporary Decorations.** All temporary decorations and markers must be durable, suitably anchored, and easily removable. Temporary decorations become the property of

the Town as soon as they are placed and can be removed or modified at any time without notice. The Town shall not be held liable to any owner for the cost of such items.

- d. Flowers and Potted Plants.** If artificial or cut flowers or potted plants are used, the Town reserves the right to remove them when they are unsightly. This would also apply to wreaths, baskets of greens, and any other objects that have become unsightly. Glass/ceramic containers or ornaments, crushed stone, and other decorations which might interfere with mowing are not acceptable and may be removed without notice.
- e. Christmas Wreaths.** Christmas wreaths must be removed by January 31st.
- f. Eternal Flames.** Eternal flames are prohibited.

*Adopted October 1, 2007*  
*Revised September 29, 2010*



**To contact the Cemetery Commission with questions or concerns, please e-mail**

**[cemetery@freetownma.gov](mailto:cemetery@freetownma.gov)**

**or call the Town Hall at (508) 644-2203**