



COMMUNITY GARDEN BYLAWS

Article I - Name and Purpose of the Garden

Name of garden:

Midland Health Community Garden
4214 Andrews Highway, Midland, Texas 79703

Goals:

- To provide an accessible and affordable location where community members can practice a healthier lifestyle by growing their own fresh produce.
- To foster a stronger sense of community and quality time with family and friends while taking part in group gardening activities.

Philosophy:

The mission of the Midland Health Community Garden is to strengthen intergenerational cooperation and community health initiatives in Midland while fostering self-sufficiency by providing access for all to food production and preservation resources and promoting sustainable gardening practices.

The Mission of the Midland Health Community Garden is based on these beliefs:

We believe that access to food is a universal right. We believe that urban agriculture provides significant amounts of high quality foods.

We believe that organic gardening, being the foundation of successful agriculture, yields the highest quality foods. Furthermore, we believe that organic gardening benefits the soil, the watershed, the air and the health of the people who eat the produce. We believe that gardening involves an opportunity for people to nourish the earth.

We believe that gardening is therapeutic in that it nourishes physical and emotional health. Furthermore, we believe that gardening enhances human equality, stimulates human generosity and benefits the health of individuals, families, neighborhoods and communities.

We believe that education and information is necessary for successful gardening and food preservation.

We believe that the Midland Health Community Garden is a positive model for community development. We believe the Garden is only successful with collaborative relationships with individuals, neighborhood organizations, government agencies, University and Extension resources, service organizations and philanthropic entities.

We, the undersigned members of the Midland Health garden group, hereby agree to hold harmless Midland Health from and against any damage, loss, liability, claim, demand, suit, cost and expense directly or indirectly resulting from, arising out of or in connection with the use of the Midland Health Garden by the garden group, its successors, assigns, employees, agents and invites.



Article II – Membership and Dues

Eligibility Requirements:

To become a member and maintain membership, an individual must:

1. Be a current and on-going resident of the City Midland. A business address does not qualify. Proof of residency must be provided at the time of admittance and upon annual renewal.

Acceptable forms of verification are as follows:

- Texas driver's license or Texas ID card, AND
- Current utility bill with Midland address and/or lease agreement.

2. Sign a Midland Health Community Garden Memorandum of Understanding and abide by the current Bylaws and Rules & Agreements of the MHCG MOU.

3. Be assigned a garden plot and actively garden said plot as described in the MHCG MOU. If all garden plots are occupied, prospective members' names are placed on a waiting list.

4. Attend a minimum of 8 monthly garden work days annually, approximately 16 hours. Member(s) must also attend at least two Master Gardeners classes, of their choice, per year.

5. Remain current with all associated garden dues and fees.

Special Notes Regarding Member Eligibility:

1. Each Midland residential address may be assigned only one plot.

2. Plot holder(s) must attend a Master Gardeners 'Introduction to Gardening' class before planting in their assigned plot.

3. Plots are assigned by the Membership and Plots Coordinator and cannot be transferred, exchanged or sublet to another person. Plots may only be reassigned at the discretion of the Coordinator.

4. Each member shall keep the Membership and Plots Coordinator notified of his/her most current address and telephone number and preferably an email address. Any correspondence mailed or emailed to the members addresses on file, either physical or email, is considered delivered. If a member moves out of the City Midland, he/she must inform the Membership and Plots Coordinator immediately and relinquish the plot.

5. Upon a member's death, the spouse or significant other of the same address may take over the garden plot as a member in his/her own right.

Membership Fees:

The fee for the use of the garden is (\$32.00) per plot, per year. A year is defined as January 1 through December 31. Renewal fees are to be paid annually by January 31. Fee for half a year (beginning July 1 or later) is (\$16.00) per plot, per half year. There are no refunds.

Returned Check Fee: \$30.00

Lost Key Fee: \$20 per key



Article III – Governance

The Committee:

The Midland Health Community Garden Committee, known throughout this document as The Committee, is responsible for decisions regarding the membership and also current and future Garden activities.

Committee members develop, interpret, and enforce the Memorandum of Understanding (a separate document).

The Committee meets on a regular basis to discuss problems in The Garden and find solutions to these problems. The Committee determines its meeting schedule and method. Meeting times and changes in the meeting schedule are decided by majority vote. The number of Committee members is determined by The Committee and may change depending on retirement and on the needs of The Garden as viewed by The Committee.

Voting Rules:

Votes may be taken at Committee meetings only in the presence of a quorum. A quorum is defined as at least 50 percent of the current Committee membership. Only Committee members may vote on proposed motions. Proposals put before The Committee must be accepted by a majority of those attending to pass. Decisions to remove a Committee Member or amend the Bylaws require a majority vote of current Committee members in favor to pass.

The Committee is responsible for:

- Developing, interpreting, and enforcing the Memorandum of Understanding
- Reviewing the Memorandum of Understanding and Bylaws on a regular basis, to be certain that both documents are fair, consistent, and up to-date
- Developing long-range plans for the continuation and improvement of The Garden and The Garden organization. The Committee may implement these plans when feasible.
- Planning and arranging any Garden sponsored activities intended for the benefit and enjoyment of its membership and the surrounding community.
- Defining positions of responsibility, called Coordinators, and recruiting Members to fulfill these responsibilities.

Committee Membership:

Membership in The Committee is voluntary and open to Garden members in good standing who have been members of The Garden for at least one gardening season. Committee members do not serve a fixed term. Continued membership is contingent on fulfilling the requirements of Committee membership as defined by The Committee. Prospective Committee members who meet the above criteria may nominate themselves or be nominated for invitation by a standing member of The Committee. To become a member of The Committee, a prospective member must be approved by a majority vote of the standing Committee.

To retain membership on The Committee, a member must meet the following requirements:

- Remain a member in good standing of The Garden. Good standing is defined as having no more than one citation for rule violations within any 12 month period.
- Attend Committee meetings regularly—no more than one unexcused absence or four excused absences per year (an absence is excused by notifying other members in advance by email, mail, or telephone and also fulfilling any commitments scheduled for completion by the time of the meeting)



Article IV – Coordinators

Purpose of Coordinators:

Coordinators serve to manage specific functions of The Garden’s organization. Certain core functions are basic and essential to the continued operation of The Garden. These core functions include oversight of The Garden’s finances, membership and records, and events and communication. Beyond these core functions, The Committee may decide that The Garden should provide Coordinators for other services or functions. Coordinators of these functions may be members of The Committee or of the general Garden membership.

Finance Coordinator:

The Finance Coordinator is responsible for:

- Receiving all dues and monies and receiving, depositing, and accounting for all funds received by The Garden as required and authorized.
- Keeping records of annual dues paid by gardeners, as well as expenditures and disbursements derived from garden dues.
- Maintaining financial spreadsheet of Garden finances, including all accounts payable, receivable, liabilities, assets, loans, disbursements, etc. in such form and format that any member may review it within one week’s notice. Such records must be in a standard format that can be easily passed onto future Finance Coordinators.
- Preparing and presents a financial report to the membership once per year or as directed by The Committee.
- Maintaining payment relationship, accounts and records as needed with fiscal sponsor, Midland Health, which will transact certain business on behalf of the Garden.

Membership and Plots Coordinator:

The Membership and Plots Coordinator is responsible for:

- Assigning plots to members who have filled out an application and paid their dues.
- Maintaining the essential membership and plot data—in other words, contact information, garden applications, plot assignments, plot sizes, and violation records.
- Keeping an updated waiting list of prospective members and their contact information and offers membership to new gardeners through assignment of available plots.

Events and Communications Coordinator:

The Events and Communications Coordinator is responsible for:

- Managing the community garden email account, monthly newsletter, and social media.
- Planning and coordinating fundraisers, community lunches, tours, and other social events at the Garden and distributing flyers to the public to promote those events.
- Organizing monthly garden work days and potlucks, annual membership meetings, classes or workshops at the Garden, and other events that are exclusive to plot owners.
- Reaching out to press for event coverage and announcements and developing strong relationships with local churches, schools, non-profit organizations, and services groups that wish to contribute to the Garden.

Midland Health Liaison:

The Midland Health Liaison serves as the connection between the Garden and Midland Health and will assist with setting up and organizing the garden until The Committee is formed.



Article V – Meetings and Events

Introduction to Gardening Class:

All new plot holders are required to attend an 'Introduction to Gardening' class hosted by the Master Gardeners. This class will be offered at least two times each Spring and Fall. Plot owners will not be allowed to plant in their assigned lots until this class is complete.

Gardening Education Classes:

These free classes are held by the Master Gardeners on various topics such as gardening, composting, etc. Contact the Master Gardeners at 432-498-4071 for a schedule of classes.

Plot holders are required to attend at least 2 gardening classes, of their choice, per year. Failure to complete two Master Gardeners classes per year may negatively impact the member's garden membership renewal.

Monthly Garden Work Days:

This is a day when members gather in a group to do basic garden maintenance. It is a great way to help the garden with major chores, and to learn gardening skills from more experienced gardeners. Work days are the second Saturday of every month from 10:30 a.m. to noon.

Plot holders are required to attend at least 8 garden work days per year. Failure to attend at least 8 garden work days may negatively impact the member's garden membership renewal. If you work weekends, please make other arrangements with the Membership and Plots Coordinator to complete your work day hours.

Monthly Committee Meeting:

This is a business meeting that requires a quorum of a majority of The Committee members. Details of garden administration will be the general topic of these meetings. Plot holders are not required to attend these meetings. However, plot holders interested in being part of the ongoing implementation of garden policy, scheduling, event planning, and problem solving, should attend these meetings.

Annual Membership Meeting:

At this meeting, the decisions and actions of the previous year are reviewed. The bylaws may only be revised at this meeting. Elections for The Committee are held at this meeting. A quorum of a majority of garden committee members need to be present to vote on garden changes. Plot holders who want to be part of making the basic decisions and policies for the garden should attend this meeting, but it is not a requirement.