



Alhambra Library Garden Group General Garden Policy

Introduction:

The Alhambra Library Garden Group offers beginning gardeners a supportive community environment to explore gardening. Participants have the opportunity to tend to a 5-month charter plot (January-May or July-November) where they can grow vegetables, herbs, or flowers. Our goal is to enrich and empower individuals to cultivate their own nutritious produce and inspire them to start gardens at home.

The garden space consists of thirty-six plots (each measuring 2' 5" x 3' 11") available to Alhambra residents and library members for growing approved seeds and plants. This initiative aims to promote healthy eating habits and demonstrate the feasibility of urban gardening.

Policy:

1. Garden space

1.1 The Alhambra Library provides thirty-six city-owned plots (2' 5" x 3' 11") for the planting, maintenance, and harvesting of approved vegetables, herbs, and flowers. Plots are available for a 5-month charter, from January 2 to May 31 and July 1 to November 30. Participants must return their plots in good condition at the end of their term.

1.2 Participants will receive soil and seeds from the library but must obtain approval for any outside seeds or starter plants. The Library reserves the right to decline any seeds or plants that do not meet its guidelines.

1.3 Participants are responsible for maintaining their plots and may use their harvest for personal consumption or donate it to the Library's Produce Exchange Station or Second Floor Planting Station.

1.4 Garden access is available to all members. Report any incidents of theft or vandalism to the Library via phone or email. Gates to plots will remain unlocked; gardeners should close them after use. The Library is not liable for lost or damaged plants. For inquiries, please contact gardengroup@alhambralibrary.org.

1.5 Gardeners must respect adjacent plots and discouraged from using bulky items like outdoor chairs or umbrellas. Small kneeling supports and fold-out chairs are permitted, but gardeners should be considerate of their neighbors. A garden bucket with tools (knee pads, trowels, pruners, etc.) can be checked out during library hours and must be returned 1 hour before closing.

1.6 Structures and oversized decorations are not allowed. Plant supports (e.g., ties, wires, stakes) should not exceed 4 feet and must not obstruct neighboring plots.

1.7 Participants are responsible for maintaining their plots. If personal circumstances prevent attendance, please inform Garden Group Administration by email: gardengroup@alhambralibrary.org. Abandoned plots will be reclaimed.

1.8 Do not water or tend to other plots without permission. Plot ownership is non-transferable.

1.9 Participants must start working on their plots by time specified in orientation, after signing the agreement. The Library will follow up twice if a plot appears unattended. Failure to respond may result in annulment of the contract and assignment to the next participant on the waitlist.

2. Garden Group Eligibility

2.1 Priority is given to Alhambra residents with library cards in good standing, followed by library cardholders from neighboring cities and other areas.

2.2 Each participant will be assigned a plot and is responsible for remembering its location.

2.3 A valid library card is required to check out garden tools and watering canisters.

2.4 The garden contract signer must be at least 18 years old. Children are welcome to participate as part of the household.

2.5 Only one plot is permitted per household unless additional plots are available.

3. Mandatory Meetings

3.1 Participants must attend three meetings during their charter term.

3.2 Meeting 1: In the first month, we will discuss general rules and best gardening practices.

3.3 Meeting 2: Mid-term, we will review progress by survey, address questions, and remind participants about harvesting and plot upkeep.

3.4 Meeting 3: In the final month, participants will complete a survey about their experiences and provide feedback.

4. Plot-Gardener Responsibilities

4.1 Participants agree to maintain their plots throughout the charter term (January-May or July-November).

4.2 Plots must be kept tidy and free from debris.

4.3 Gardeners should manage weeds as they arise.

4.4 Only approved seeds and plants may be cultivated.

4.5 Participants are responsible for watering their plots, using their own water canisters or borrowing them from the library during business hours. All borrowed items must be returned 1 hour before closing.

4.6 Harvests are for personal use only and not for profit.

4.7 Garden access is allowed from dawn to dusk during the agreement term.

4.8 Chemical pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers are prohibited. Use of non-hazardous, organic materials for plot maintenance is allowed.

4.9 If plants become infested with pests or diseases, the Library reserves the right to remove them.

5. Garden Conduct

5.1 Respect among gardeners is essential. Inappropriate language or behavior is not tolerated.

5.2 Taking care of other plots is prohibited unless given permission.

5.3 Children must always be supervised by an adult.

5.4 Alcohol, smoking, vaping, and illegal substances are not allowed.

5.5 Pets are not permitted in the garden area.

5.6 Guests must be accompanied by the Gardener.

5.7 Gardeners should practice safety while gardening and handling tools carefully. The Library is not responsible for any injuries incurred.

6. Violating Garden Policy

6.1 Violations of policy may result in removal from the Garden Group and loss of garden access.

6.2 The Library reserves the right to terminate user agreements at any time.

6.3 Violations include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to follow plot maintenance guidelines or growing unauthorized items.

- Harassment of other gardeners, patrons, or staff.
- Abandonment of plots.
- Verbal or physical altercations.

6.4 First Infraction: A verbal or written warning will be issued.

Second Infraction: A written final notice will be given.

Third Infraction: Removal from the Garden Group will occur after another incident, and the plot will be returned to the Library. Verbal or physical altercations may result in immediate removal without notice. The City reserves the right to remove a participant from the Garden Group at the first or second infraction level, depending upon the severity of the violation, judged in the sole discretion of the City Librarian.

7. The Alhambra Library reserves the right to make all final decisions regarding the Garden Group program. This includes, but is not limited to, the right to interpret, modify, amend, suspend, or terminate any part of this policy or the program itself at any time, with or without prior notice. All participants agree to abide by the most current version of the policy as determined by the library.