



Vermont
FOREST CEMETERY

Policies, Practices, and Procedures
as amended October 5, 2026

1. Becoming a Graveholder

- a. Full payment, **including Service Charges billed at the lowest rate**, will be due before rights to burial are conveyed.
- b. Deed to Convey Burial Rights:
 - i. \$1000 Full lot
 - ii. \$500 Half-lot
 - for cremation urns, **only if approved by Board of Directors**
 - pets are not currently interred at Vermont Forest Cemetery
- c. Service Charges:
 - i. Participatory burial: \$1,700
 - Cemetery staff opens grave
 - Mourners carry, lower, and assist with closing
 - ii. Non-participatory burial: \$2,800
 - Cemetery staff opens grave
 - Cemetery provides pallbearers to carry and lower
 - Cemetery staff closes grave
 - iii. Cremation urn service charge: \$500
 - iv. Weekend surcharge for any burial: \$200
 - v. Winter surcharge for any burial: \$500
 - vi. Recording Deed with the Town of Roxbury: \$20 (cost)
- d. The cost of burial rights is non-refundable.
- e. Deed to Convey Burial Rights is transferable.
 - i. Conditions: by will or to “immediate family” only
 - The Board of Directors of Vermont Forest Cemetery has defined “immediate family” as:
 - a. spouse/partner/civil union
 - b. adult children
 - c. siblings
 - ii. Exceptions will be considered.
- f. If burial rights will not be exercised, VFC reserves the right to buy them back at 40% of original purchase price.
- g. Donations, gifts, and bequests
 - i. Tax-deductible donations can be directed to funds:
 - General Operations Fund
 - a. To support maintenance and upkeep
 - Family Support Fund
 - a. To defray costs for those who need assistance
 - ii. By Federal law, the cost of burial rights is **not** tax-deductible.

h. Co-stewardship

- i. A Graveholder can opt-in to be a Steward of Vermont Forest Cemetery.
 - ii. Responsibilities may include:
 - maintain trails to gravesites
 - maintain forest plantings and facilities
 - participate in work days
 - develop programming and projects
- i. Vermont Forest Cemetery does not charge for burial of premature, newborn, or infant children.

2. Containers

- a. All containers must be made of natural, biodegradable materials.
 - i. The weight of an empty container should be no more than 25 kg (55 lbs)
 - Larger containers may be permitted on a case-by-case basis.
 - Under no circumstances will the Cemetery be responsible for providing pallbearers for outsized containers.
- b. Containers made of live fungal material are strictly prohibited.
 - i. No mushroom suits, living coffins, etc. may be interred at Vermont Forest Cemetery.
 - These products are not necessary. Use of such products is based on a misunderstanding of the science of decomposition and poses a threat to the mycelial network.
- c. A backboard must be included if using a shroud.
- d. We recommend handles on a casket.

3. Markers

- a. All markers must be approved by Cemetery staff.
- b. Except in 'rewilding' sections, markers must:
 - i. be less than 45 kg (~100 lbs) in weight;
 - ii. stand no more than 50 cm (~20 in) above the surrounding landscape;
 - iii. be no larger than the grave itself;
 - iv. be placed by hand;
 - v. be made of natural materials;
 - vi. not have a concrete base.
- c. In 'rewilding' sections, markers must:
 - i. consist of only names and dates of the deceased;
 - ii. be less than 20 kg (~44 lbs) in weight;
 - iii. stand no more than 25 cm (~10 in) above the surrounding landscape;
 - iv. be no larger than grave itself;
 - v. be placed by hand;
 - vi. be made of natural materials that retain their natural shape;
 - vii. not have a concrete base.
- d. Government-provided markers
 - i. Flat grave markers in granite are permissible.
 - ii. Upright headstones or flat bronze markers may not be used.

- e. Marker design
 - i. Markers can be carved, but carving designs must be pre-approved by Cemetery staff.
 - ii. Stones should not be polished unless being reused or sealed.
 - iii. Airbrushing is discouraged: please discuss with Cemetery staff.
 - iv. Should be something that the Graveholder can place by hand.
 - Staff can place markers for a service charge of \$250.

4. Decorations

- a. There are no restrictions on decorations at the time of burial, but anything *other than* the following that remains after the burial will be removed by Cemetery staff and returned to the family:
 - i. Flowers/plantings: Must be native and/or naturalized.
 - ii. Degradable decorations: anything made of natural biodegradable materials that will return to the earth; All decorations must be contained within the outline of the 3 m x 3 m burial plot.
 - iii. Non-degradable objects
 - Stone cairns less than 10 inches in height and Memory Stones/wishing stones are permissible.
 - All decorations that remain on the gravesite must be natural and unadorned with paint or other materials.
- b. Natural decorations may be collected at the time of burial.
- c. Materials must be gathered within the same glade where the burial takes place.
- d. Do not cut anything, including flowers, without explicit permission from a member of Cemetery staff.
- e. Do not remove stones from the rock walls (even if they have fallen) or the stone mounds.

5. Visiting the Cemetery

- a. Vermont Forest Cemetery is open from dawn to dusk.
- b. This is a remote, rustic cemetery and staff is not always present. Unattended visits are at the visitor's own risk.
- c. Visitors are urged to exercise caution and common sense with regards to weather.
- d. No camping or overnight visits.

6. Conduct in the Cemetery

Regardless of why they are visiting the Cemetery, visitors are encouraged to be mindful of their impact on the forest and on other humans, and to be respectful of their needs.

- a. Stay on trails and obey signs.
- b. Do not disturb a grave (or, if unsure, do not disturb any object you find).
- c. Do not climb on, or remove anything from, the stone mounds or rock walls.
- d. Do not remove any material from the Cemetery grounds.
- e. There are no trash cans at the Cemetery: please pack out your own rubbish and pet waste.
- f. Photography: at the discretion of the family, we welcome photos shared with us and will repost with permission to our website and social media pages. Photos shared with permission may also be used for educational and promotional purposes.
- g. No soliciting.

7. Opening and closing graves

- a. The Cemetery is open for burial 7 days a week, 365 days a year.
 - i. At least 72 hour notice is required before opening any grave, except during winter, the time of thaw known as “mud season,” and in the case of extreme weather events such as flooding.
 - ii. In such conditions, 5 day notice is strongly preferred.
- b. Cemetery access may be restricted if state or town highways are unsafe or marked as closed.
- c. The Town of Roxbury is not responsible for burials.

8. Dogs

- a. Dogs are welcome on leash.
- b. Dog waste must be removed by the owner.
- c. There are no trash cans at the Cemetery.

9. Parking

- a. Parking on-site is very limited.
 - i. Plan on carpooling.
 - ii. Parking is prioritized for funeral service.
- b. As much as possible, services will be announced in advance with a sign at the cemetery and on our website.

10. Community Circles and Governance

The Cemetery's governance is based on the principles of sociocracy (also known as Dynamic Governance). The principles are defined in Section 3 of the Bylaws of Vermont Forest Cemetery, Inc.

- a. The Principle of Circles
 - i. The Cemetery's structure consists of semi-autonomous interlinking circles.
 - ii. Broader circles set and/or affirm the purposes of more-focused sub-circles.
- b. The Principle of Consent
 - i. Before a decision can take effect, every member of a circle must consent.
 - ii. Consent is defined as having no “reasoned objections”.
 - iii. A reasoned objection is made when there is a concern that the proposal would negatively affect the circle's ability to serve its purpose.
- c. Membership
 - i. The Board of Directors of Vermont Forest Cemetery, Inc. shall establish circle membership.
 - ii. Membership is a qualification for participation in the sociocratic governance structure of the Cemetery.

GENERAL RULES

The Board of Directors of Vermont Forest Cemetery, Inc. reserves the right, without notice, to make temporary exceptions, suspensions or modifications in any of these policies and procedures, when in their judgment, the same are advisable and such temporary exceptions, suspensions or modifications shall in no way be considered as affecting the general application of such policies and procedures.

In all matters not specifically covered by these policies and procedures, the Board reserves the right to take any action which in its judgment is deemed reasonable. Such action shall be binding upon the Graveholder, cemetery visitors and all parties concerned.

The Board reserves the right at any time to change, alter, repeal, rescind or add to these policies and procedures or any part thereof or to adopt any new policy and/or procedure with respect to the Cemetery.