

PARSONS CEMETERY RULES AND REGULATIONS (Rev July 7, 2026)

Parsons Cemetery is today both operational and historic, with graves dating to the early 1800s. In the words of architectural historian, Keith Eggener, Parsons Cemetery is “*an urban cemetery where life meets death, nature meets city, and present meets past.*” As such, the Parsons Cemetery Advisory Committee, comprised of six volunteers, works hard at sharing Parsons Cemetery’s rich history and beautiful grounds with the community, historians, nature lovers, and tourists.

We cannot maintain this cemetery at its current level of care into perpetuity without your support, please consider a gift or bequest to the

Parsons Cemetery Perpetual Care Endowment Fund
Managed by the Community Foundation of Eastern Shore (CFES)
For questions, please contact: B.J. Summers 410-742-9911
Director of Development and Donor Relations

other

Donate Online (<https://www.cfes.org/donate>): *Friends of Parsons Cemetery Fund*
Also Managed by the Community Foundation of Eastern Shore (CFES)
Or mail to Parsons Cemetery, P.O. Box 1718, Salisbury, MD 21892

Visitors

Nearly all who visit here respect the sanctity of Parsons Cemetery, but even then, we find we need a few rules and regulations to mitigate misunderstandings, while ensuring the safety and comfort of those visiting and working here.

1. The Cemetery is open 7 days a week from sunup to sundown. On the 3rd Saturday of December, Parsons Cemetery hosts the Wreaths Across America Day Ceremony sponsored by Operation We Care. During this time, the cemetery is closed to vehicle traffic until approximately noon. This Ceremony is open to the public and details can be found on our website, parsonscemetery.com or our Facebook Page.
2. No Trespassing with Video Surveillance is posted and enforced after sundown and before sunup whether the cemetery gates are open or closed.
3. As an operational cemetery with funerals, and a historical cemetery with walking and bus tours, visitors may need to work their way around these activities to not distract or disturb them. Parsons has a series of lanes and crossovers to facilitate this. A map is located at the main entrance kiosk and on the parsonscemetery.com website.
4. While recognizing the importance and position of pets in many families, leash laws are enforced in this privately-owned cemetery, and the owner is responsible for cleaning up after their pet(s).
5. All motorized vehicles, human-powered bikes, scooters, skates, skateboards, and other recreational items are restricted to the black macadam asphalt paved roadways, and not permitted on brick and/or natural stone pathways, steps, curbing, or other decorative features. And they shall have no contact with monuments or memorials.
6. Hunting and fishing on the cemetery grounds are prohibited.
7. Alcoholic beverages and illegal drugs are prohibited.
8. Anyone caught stealing from grave sites or defacing cemetery property and/or its grounds will be subject to the fullest criminal prosecution allowable under the law.

Decorations

Parsons Cemetery has a long history of families remembering their loved ones with flowers, decorations, and mementoes, and these are looked upon favorably. However, there are over 13,000 graves, many with headstones and monuments, located on Parsons Cemetery’s 18 acres. These beautiful grounds require far more extensive grounds maintenance than a lawn cemetery. Every other week during grass growing season, the lawn tractor is followed by the push mowers, followed by the string cutters, and by the leaf blowers when wet grass sticks to the monuments. This job is made more difficult when the winds off Johnsons Pond blow light weight and deteriorating items into the path of the mowers or items are left in a manner that interferes with trimming. Please help us.

1. Floral arrangements, decorations, and mementos are allowed. All arrangements or items are placed on grave sites at the donor’s own risk. Given the number of loved ones resting here, and the number of visitors we have each day, the cemetery cannot, and will not be responsible for the theft of or damage to items left at gravesites.
2. All items must be put on grave sites right next to monuments or markers for the least interference with grounds maintenance.

3. All floral arrangements should be weighted to avoid being blown away from the grave and misplaced elsewhere.
4. Limitations:
 - a. The use of breakable items (i.e., glass vases, glass containers, porcelain, etc.) is not permitted. Breakable items are a hazard to cemetery visitors, our maintenance crew, and our maintenance equipment.
 - b. For the same reason, we ask that you not use wire, wire pins, or place rods of any kind in the vase or at the graveside.
 - c. Balloons are prohibited as they deflate, interfere with mowing, and are considered a hazard to wildlife.
 - d. Planting of trees, shrubs, bushes, along with landscaping and hardscaping, are prohibited unless agreed to in advance by the Cemetery Manager. **The use of plastic fencing around a gravesite or the use of decorative stones** (pebbles/gravel) are prohibited as they interfere with the mowing and weed trimming and they are a safety hazard for the staff. ***Any decorative stones will be removed by the cemetery management.***
 - e. The placing of Funeral Blankets or any canvas across grave spaces is prohibited. They will be removed by the cemetery manager.
5. Removal:
 - a. All holiday decorations must be removed within one month after the event. Parsons Cemetery's Management recognizes some families use the same holiday decorations from one year to the next and ask you to be mindful of the need to timely remove them.
 - b. Flower arrangements and other decorations left after a funeral service will be left in place for up to one week then removed.
 - c. Items which have deteriorated, which are contrary to cemetery regulations, or do not contribute to the beauty and dignity of the cemetery as determined by Cemetery management, will be removed by cemetery grounds staff and disposed of.
 - d. The Parsons Cemetery Management staff and its grounds maintenance crew cannot be held responsible for removed items.

Purchasing of Lots (Spaces)

1. Purchasing of lots, and issuing of deeds for those spaces, gives the buyer the right to be buried in those spaces. At no time is the buyer the owner of the property.
2. If for any reason the buyer wishes to transfer the lot's deed to someone else, a new deed will be issued. This must be done through an appointment with the Cemetery Manager, and the changes made part of Parsons Cemetery's permanent records.
3. Transfer of cemetery property and issuance of deeds must be scheduled during our regular business hours. Deeds are processed within 30 days of transfer, or when the account is paid in full.

Memorials and Monuments

1. A Monument Marking deposit will be collected at the time of burial for the cemetery costs associated with the placement of a monument. This deposit will be utilized upon placement of a monument by an outside vendor. If no monument is placed after 18-months from burial, this deposit will be utilized by Parsons Cemetery to place a minimal marker on the grave.
2. All memorials shall be constructed of natural stone or bronze. This is a Cemetery standard and ensures longevity and ease of maintenance. All memorials shall be supported by an approved foundation. Foundation information is available from the Cemetery Manager.
3. Gravestone rubbing, used to create an image of surface features of stone on paper, has been banned as the process damages fragile stones. Pictures of these stones are available and can be found online under the [Find-A-Grave Website, Parsons Cemetery, MD.](#)
4. No permanent marker, monument, vase, bench, mausoleum, hardscaping, landscaping, mulch, or other permanent item may be placed on graves without authorization by the cemetery manager. Approvals must be in writing and attached to the cemetery file.
5. Mausoleums will only be permitted in pre-approved locations.
6. The Memorial Walkway section by Water's Edge is an area designated for permanent inurnments. Inurnment information is available from the Cemetery Manager. Scattering of ashes in this area is prohibited by public law due to its proximity to the water.

7. Scattering of ashes is prohibited throughout Parsons Cemetery, however, ashes can be buried in your existing or new family lot/plot. Please consult with the Cemetery Manager on options.
8. Memorials and Monuments are the personal property of the family who placed them in the cemetery. However, all memorial and monument cleaning and maintenance must be done by Parsons Cemetery or a contractor preapproved by the Cemetery Management.

Funeral Directors, Dealers, Contractors

1. All funeral directors must complete the authorization form, and graves must be located and marked by the manager of the cemetery 48 hours prior to service.
2. All graves must be opened/closed by the cemetery-contracted vault company.
3. Each grave must have an outer burial container. This may be constructed of concrete, metal, or plastic, and must be an approved outer burial container.
4. Partially “green” burials are permitted, subject to conditions that are available from the Cemetery’s manager
5. Dealers or contractors who erect, install, construct, or deliver materials within the cemetery shall be responsible for compliance with cemetery rules and regulations.
6. No outside contractor may perform work in the Cemetery without written permission from the Cemetery Manager.

Questions and/or concerns should be directed to:
Cemetery Manager
Phone: (443) 366-4764
Email: parsonscemetery1873@gmail.com