

Cemeteries and Crematorium Policy

PURPOSE:

The policy is intended to control the administration, management and maintenance of the City of Launceston cemeteries and crematorium.

It provides direction to assist in carrying out the functions of cemeteries and crematorium. It takes into account statute, common law, regulations and standards that affect the management and operation. It also sets reasonable and practical standards of conduct for those entering the cemeteries, crematorium and memorial gardens.

OBJECTIVES:

City of Launceston aims to competently and effectively manage and maintain the cemeteries and the crematorium to meet the needs of its community.

To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation including the *Burial and Cremation Act 2019* (Tas).

SCOPE:

The policy applies to all cemeteries, the crematorium and memorial gardens controlled, managed, administered, operated and maintained by the City of Launceston in the Launceston municipal area.

POLICY:

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

A funeral, interment or works must not be carried out at a cemetery under the control of the City of Launceston without the approval of the Business Leader Carr Villa (Business Leader).

Any person carrying out work (including contractors, burials and cremations) in a cemetery must comply with requirements of any respective legislation including the *Work Health and Safety Act 2012* (TAS) and any other relevant City of Launceston policy or procedure of which they have notice.

FUNERALS

Days and Times When Funerals can be Held

A funeral may be conducted at a cemetery between 8.30am and 3.30pm on weekdays other than public holidays, finishing no later than 3.30pm and between 8.30am and 11.30am on Saturdays, finishing no later than 11.30am. The time the funeral is to be held will be the decision of the Business Leader.

Applications for funerals to be conducted outside these hours on weekdays may be made in writing to the Business Leader. Permission to conduct funerals outside these hours will be at the discretion of the Business Leader. The after hours fee will apply to these funerals.

A funeral must not be held at a cemetery without the express permission of the Business Leader on a:

- (a) Saturday afternoon;
- (b) Sunday; or
- (c) Public holiday.

The exception to this is if the Chief Environmental Health Officer certifies that it is necessary for it to be conducted for reasons of public health.

Request for Cremation or Burial

A request for a cremation or burial from the funeral director or other person conducting the service must be lodged with the Business Leader during business hours:

- (a) in the case of a cremation, not less than four working hours before the cremation service; and
- (b) in the case of a burial, not less than seven working hours before the burial.

GRAVES

Digging of Graves

1. All graves, other than those described in sub-clause 2 must be dug by City of Launceston.
2. Any person desiring a brick grave, vault, or monument must obtain relevant approval of the Council and approval of the Business Leader.

Location of Grave

The Business Leader will determine the location of a grave unless a pre-purchase arrangement is in place.

Minimum Grave Depths

1. A burial will not be permitted unless the minimum cover of earth over the coffin is 1,220mm from the lowest part of the ground surrounding the grave, except as provided by sub-clause 2.
2. If, when the grave is excavated, the minimum cover cannot be provided, concrete must, on payment of a miscellaneous fee, be used on the formula of 50mm of concrete being the equivalent of 310mm of earth.

Conversion of a Common Site

1. A common site may be converted to a private site upon payment of the fee prescribed in the *Schedule of Fees* for Carr Villa Memorial Park under *Conversion Free Ground to Private*, provided that:
 - (a) a minimum of ten years has expired since the date of burial;
 - (b) no subsequent burials, excluding the burial of cremated remains, can take place in such a site.

CREMATORIUM

Use of Crematorium Chapel

The crematorium chapel must not be used for any purpose other than for cremation, memorial and burial services.

Fittings on Coffins

Any non-combustible fittings on coffins and caskets must be removed prior to cremation. All coffins delivered for a cremation must have handles affixed to the side for safe handling.

Family Members Present During Cremation

Immediate family members of the deceased may be present when the coffin or casket is placed in the furnace, provided prior notification is given to the Business Leader.

Floral Tributes at the Crematorium

Floral tributes at the crematorium may be displayed for a maximum of twenty-four hours from the time of the cremation, after which they may be removed and disposed of by an employee of the City of Launceston.

Removal or Placement of Cremated Remains

All removal of ashes is to be made by an authorised employee of City of Launceston.

The placement of ashes is to be made by an authorised employee of City of Launceston. The Business Leader can authorise a Funeral Director to conduct a placement service for their clients on the day of placement.

An authorised employee of City of Launceston will attend the placement if a family member wishes to place the ashes themselves.

City of Launceston will manage the disposal of items such as surgical implants in an environmentally sensitive manner.

PLANTING OF TREES, SHRUBS AND PLANTS

Planting of Trees, Shrubs or Plants Restrictions

1. A person must not plant a tree, shrub or other plant in any ground in a cemetery without the consent of the Business Leader.
2. If a person plants a tree, shrub or other plant in any ground in a cemetery without consent of the Business Leader, an employee of City of Launceston may remove and dispose of that tree, shrub or other plant.
3. If the tree, shrub or other plant is not maintained to the satisfaction of the Business Leader, the Business Leader may direct the tree, shrub or other plant be removed under direction of an employee of the City of Launceston or contractor.

MONUMENTS AND OTHER WORKS

Approval to Construct a Monument or other structure

1. A person erecting a monument or other structure in a cemetery must be authorised in writing by the Business Leader to do so; and
2. A person must not erect a monument or other structure in a cemetery unless that person is either a qualified monumental mason, or in the opinion of the Business Leader, a person who is experienced in carrying on such work and have obtained any required approval of the Council.

Standard of Construction

Any structure to be erected in the cemetery will not be authorised by the Business Leader unless the proposed structure conforms to any relevant and current Australian Standard and has relevant approval of the Council.

Grave Numbers

The grave number, in accordance with City of Launceston's plan of the cemetery, must be marked on the base of every monument so as to be clearly visible from the foot of the grave.

Times of Construction

A person, who has been authorised in writing by the Business Leader, must not carry out any monumental mason's work in connection with a grave site on weekends or a public holiday. Authorised construction may only be conducted between 7:30am and 4:30pm on weekdays.

Maintenance of Structures

City of Launceston is not responsible for the upkeep, maintenance or repair of any monument or structure over a burial place. The cleaning, maintenance, repair or restoration of a structure in a cemetery is the responsibility of the senior next of kin.

Construction Equipment

A person erecting a monument, headstone, wall, railing or memorial of any description must not place any plant, equipment, or surplus materials on any adjoining grave or ground, unless authorised by the Business Leader.

Construction Debris

A person erecting a monument, headstone, wall, railing or memorial of any description must remove all stones, refuse, and rubbish remaining after construction work is completed and must leave the area clean and tidy to the satisfaction of the Business Leader.

Register at Cemetery Office

1. A person, who has applied for and received a permit by the Business Leader, must not commence any works in a cemetery unless that person has registered their attendance at the office of the cemetery or as otherwise directed.
2. A person must display evidence of a permit, or produce evidence of such permit on request by the Business Leader or an authorised officer, whilst carrying out works in a cemetery.

Monuments on a Common Site

A person must not erect any monument on a common site.

Fences

All requests for permanent fences erected must be approved by the Business Leader, of metal construction and must not exceed 760mm in height.

Inscriptions and Design

Prior to its erection, the Manager must approve of the design of any monument proposed to be erected, including the epitaph or inscription.

Headstones in Limited Monumental Lawn Cemetery

1. The maximum overall allowable dimensions for a headstone in a limited monumental lawn cemetery are 1,220mm wide, 760mm high and 250mm deep. The base of the headstone has to have a 90mm clearance from the edge of the beam.
2. Any receptacles for floral tributes must be provided within the dimensions in clause (1) above.

3. A grave number is required to be permanently and clearly inscribed on the base of the headstone for a lawn style monument.

Joint Monuments

1. A joint monument is permissible for adjacent graves if it meets the height and depth dimensions provided for headstones in a limited monumental lawn cemetery. A joint monument will attract twice the usual permit fee.
2. The width of a monument that includes more than one plot must not exceed the width of individual monuments for the same number of plots.

Removal and Replacement of Structures for the Purpose of Burial

1. A person may apply to the Business Leader for approval to open a grave or associated structure:
 - (a) At their cost;
 - (b) For a lawful purpose; and
 - (c) In accordance with this policy.
2. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that:
 - (a) A safe system of work is provided during the approved works; and
 - (b) Any damage to the grave or the cemetery is made good as directed by the Business Leader.
3. The Business Leader may require complete removal of the monumental work if this action is deemed to be necessary for safety reasons.

Repair of Monuments, Vaults, Graves or Fences

1. The applicant acknowledges that City of Launceston is not responsible for keeping a monument, vault, grave, or graveside fence in good repair and that the applicant must make arrangements to ensure that repairs take place.
2. If the person fails to keep any monument, vault, grave or fence in good repair, or if the terms and conditions upon which permission to erect or construct it have not been met, the Business Leader may arrange to take down and remove that monument or other construction or do any other work considered necessary. The City of Launceston reserves the right to recover any associated costs from the person responsible for failing to carry out the repairs.

Wooden and Temporary Structures

1. A person may apply to the Business Leader for approval, to place a temporary wooden memorial such as a wooden cross at a grave. The arrangement must be removed when directed or after a period not exceeding two years.

PLAQUES, VASES AND FLORAL TRIBUTES

Standard Plaques

All plaques and vases must meet the standard as detailed in the catalogue available to view at the office of Carr Villa Memorial Park.

Affixing of Plaques

All plaques must be affixed or removed by an authorised employee of City of Launceston. All plaques not purchased through Carr Villa Memorial Park attract an installation fee which must be paid prior to the plaque being affixed.

Vases

Only the approved plastic vase (as supplied by Carr Villa) is permitted in the Rose Gardens; Claygrove; Barakee Waters; Water Features; Kooyong Gardens; Garden of Memories; Lawn Cemetery and other areas as determined by the Business Leader. All other vases, glass jars, bottles, ornaments and statues will be removed.

Tributes

1. Glass, porcelain, terracotta and ceramic objects which are easily broken are not permitted as they may impact on the safety of visitors and staff.
2. Carr Villa Memorial Park employees may remove and dispose of any tribute when it is deemed unsightly, offensive and breakable or that is deemed a risk to Carr Villa Memorial Park staff and public safety.
3. All tributes must be kept within the confines of the burial or memorial location on which they are placed and must not be fixed to surrounding trees, plants or shrubs. Any tribute that is not kept within the confines of the burial or memorial location may be removed at the absolute discretion of the Business Leader.
4. Over time, tributes will wither, weather and deteriorate, affecting their presentation. Families and visitors are encouraged to remove these items before they become unsightly.

Floral Tributes

Floral tributes placed on a grave may be displayed for a maximum of seventy-two hours from the time of the funeral, after which they may be removed and disposed of by cemetery staff.

Compliance with Conditions and Directions

1. Any approval given by under this policy may be subject to conditions; and
2. A person, while in a cemetery, must follow the directions of the Business Leader or an authorised City of Launceston employee.

PRINCIPLES:

City of Launceston's Organisational Values apply to all activities.

RELATED POLICIES & PROCEDURES:

Not applicable.

RELATED LEGISLATION:

Burial and Cremation Act 2019 (Tas)

Burial and Cremation Regulations 2015 (Tas)

Dog Control Act 2000 (Tas)

REFERENCES:

Not applicable.

DEFINITIONS:

“applicant” means any person who is seeking to carry out any works or other activity within a City of Launceston cemetery, crematorium or similar facility.

“authorised City of Launceston employee” means a cemetery-based employee authorised to carry out those duties by the Business Leader.

“Business Leader” means the employee of the City of Launceston that holds the position title of Business Leader Carr Villa, including any employee appointed as acting Business Leader Carr Villa.

“cemetery” means the area set aside for burials, cremations and memorials, including landscaping, roads, paths, together with all buildings and structures.

“common site” means a grave for which no exclusive right of burial has been granted by the City of Launceston and upon which no monument may be erected.

“funeral” means the procession and service for burial or cremation and the interment of remains.

“grave” means:

(a) an interment plot;

(b) a vault; or

(c) any other site or structure in which human remains are interred.

“plaque” means a metal casting, etching, or engraving, approved by the Business Leader and placed as a memorial to the deceased.

“private site” means a grave for which an exclusive right of burial has been granted and upon which a monument or plaque can be erected.

“limited monumental lawn cemetery” means that area of the cemetery so designated by the Business Leader.

“monument” includes any concrete, granite, marble, stone or metal structure or plaque erected or placed on a grave in memory or in honour of a deceased person.

REVIEW:

This policy will be reviewed no more than five years after the date of approval (version) or more frequently, if dictated by operational demands and with the City of Launceston's approval.