

Verona Community Garden Bed Agreement - 2024
<https://www.veronanj.org/communitygarden>

Mission Statement: The mission of the Verona Community Garden (VCG) is to provide sustainable gardening opportunities for the physical and social benefit of the people of Verona through the cultivation and maintenance of a common greenspace.

A community garden contributes to the vitality of Verona by:

- Creating opportunities for gathering and interpersonal connection
- Providing an educational resource for people of all ages and abilities
- Increasing participation in sustainable practices through health and wellness activities for all citizens

Vision: The vision of the Verona Community Garden (VCG) is to provide opportunities for people to grow food for themselves, increase their healthy activity, get to know their neighbors, and create and maintain a beautiful common space. These essential assets create connections to self, others and the community at large. Verona's residents will treasure and care for this legacy, as a landmark in caring for future generations.

The VCG is administered by the VCG Committee and overseen by the Township of Verona. The VCG is located at the H.B. Whitehorne Middle School adjacent to municipal lot #1.

Fees and Seasons: \$60 for the use of one 4' x 8' garden bed, \$30 for half. The fee for the garden is refundable until Friday, April 1, 2023. Garden beds are available to lease per garden season, April through November. There are ADA accessible garden beds available.

Verona residents only may apply for beds. The person completing the agreement must be 18 years of age or older, however, family members/caregivers may use the bed with the permission of the responsible party and must be listed below. Garden beds at all times remain the property of the Verona School District (excluding the crops), and are non transferable, which means that should a gardener not be able to maintain their bed, the VCG Manager should be notified immediately by email at: veronanjcommunitygarden@gmail.com. The garden bed will be *offered to the next person on the waiting list*, the fee for the bed is non-refundable. After the fee is paid in full and the signed contract submitted, the gardener will be allowed access when the garden opens for the season on or about April 6, 2024.

Due to the overwhelming demand for garden beds, a yearly lottery will take place for the beds. A waiting list will be created and each person will be notified in the order received when a bed is available. Requests for a second bed will not be considered at this time.

Notwithstanding any of the foregoing, the Verona Board of Education reserves the right to terminate its involvement in the VCG, when it is deemed in the best interest of the School District.

Obligations of Gardeners: The main obligation is to keep the community garden a happy, secure and an enjoyable place where all participants can garden and socialize peacefully in a neighborly manner. Gardeners should respect the integrity of other garden beds and conduct themselves in a responsible manner on the premises. Gardeners are required to follow the rules and regulations of Verona Township.

Gardeners must keep their garden bed and bed perimeter maintained regularly including: control of weeds, pests and disease with organic products (as found on the Organic Materials Review Institute's list at <https://www.omri.org>), **staking plants to keep plants within the bed and disease tolerant, harvesting plants upon maturity and disposing of waste in the proper place.**

If you are unable to maintain your bed, please notify the VCG manager immediately. If a bed is not maintained or becomes abandoned, the following steps will be taken:

- First, a verbal warning will be given.
- If there is no response or correction after 7 days, the gardener will receive a written notice.
- If, after another 7 days, the violation has not ceased or been fixed, the bed will be forfeited, and the gardener will lose their privileges and plot for the remainder of the season and will not be offered a plot the following season.

Perennials may only be included in beds if they remain in a pot. These pots must be removed at the end of the season. Vegetables must be harvested when they ripen. **If you cannot harvest your produce in a timely fashion the VCG committee reserves the right to first notify you, then pick the produce so it can be donated.** Gardeners must monitor and immediately treat plant diseases and pests. (See binder in shed for fact sheets on identification and treatment). Gardeners must also report diseases and pests to the garden manager. Remove all your trimmings and prunings from the premises at the end of your gardening session; keep the garden sanitary. There will be no composting on site. Pets are prohibited from entering the VCG. Be vigilant and report any suspicious behavior to the VCG Manager or the Verona Police Department.

Mandatory Dates and Volunteer Hours (Actual Dates will be announced):

- **Garden Orientation, Opening Day Site Clean up and Build: TBD**
Opening Day is the orientation where we will review garden policies, introduce the gardeners and get the garden ready for the season. Gardeners may begin in their beds after their fee has been paid. Site maintenance by gardeners may include mulching, maintenance of beds, furniture set up, and weeding.
- **Closing Day – TBD (Mandatory attendance):** final cleanup for plots and overall garden cleanup.
- **Volunteering– NEW THIS YEAR** We also require that each family participate in one week's worth of garden maintenance throughout the summer. This will include watering of multiple beds.
- **Other Volunteer Activities:** These include weeding the fenced Community Garden perimeter, watering flowers around the Community Garden perimeter, placing ripe crops from donation beds in bins for donations (notifying the VCG committee whenever donations need to be made), cleaning garden tools, and overall helping to keep the garden space looking neat and tidy.

Access to Beds: Participants will have access to the beds on a schedule to be provided by the School District. Access is permitted to the garden beds from sunrise to sunset. Participants are prohibited from interacting with students unless coordinated by the school district and Community Garden Liaison. Participants are limited to the location of the garden beds and are not permitted on other areas of school property during the school day. Observe parking regulations.

Access to Beds by School: Participants should be aware that due to the educational nature of the garden, it may be accessed by school children as part of their curriculum.

Rules and Regulations: Anyone who signs a garden agreement is expected to comply with the garden rules and regulations provided along with this contract as amended from time to time so that we can all enjoy the benefits the garden offers.

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Please print and return page 4 and 5 with payment.

Keep the first three pages of the contract for your reference.

Printed copies are available to the Verona Community Center, 880 Bloomfield Avenue

Gardener Name: _____

Do not return a contract unless you have been notified that YOU are assigned a bed.

Community Garden Membership Agreement: By signing below, I agree that I have read and understood this application, including the obligations & rules for participation in the Verona Community Garden program. Please initial each statement below.

_____ I understand that if I do not follow the information outlined herein or the rules and regulations of the Community Garden as established by the VCG committee, the Township of Verona or the Verona Board of Education, I may lose my membership, and/or my bed will be reassigned.

_____ I recognize that I may receive amended rules and regulations and agree that I am responsible to follow the same and shall not be entitled to a refund in the event that I cannot or do not follow them for any reason.

_____ I am responsible to contact the VCG Committee if I am going to be unable to maintain my bed on a weekly basis or if I have any questions. I understand that I may assign a surrogate to care for my share if I am away, notifying the manager and providing the name and contact information of said surrogate. The maximum time someone else may care for my bed is three weeks.

_____ I use this garden at the discretion of the VCG committee and must abide by the rules and regulations. I will contact the VCG Committee if I have any dispute or issue that needs attention.

_____ I hereby agree to waive, indemnify and save and hold harmless the Township of Verona, the Verona Board of Education and the VCG Committee and its agents and volunteers charged with the administration of the garden, from and against any liability, damage, loss or claim arising out of, in connection with, or in any way related to the community garden, by me or any of my family or guests, agents, or invitees. This waiver includes but is not limited to damages arising out of personal injury and/or damage to property. This waiver shall survive any termination of this agreement.

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Gardener's Information: (Must be over 18 and provide proof of residency).

The \$60.00 or \$30 payment should be made to the Township of Verona.

Send payment and page 4-5 to:

Township of Verona,

600 Bloomfield Ave

Verona NJ 07044

Attn: Community Garden

Name(s) (clearly printed): _____

Family / Caregivers who will assist in maintaining my bed:

E-Mail address (clearly printed): _____

Phone Number: _____

Alt Phone Number: _____

Home Address:

Are you interested in a whole bed, 4'x8' , \$60 . **yes / no**

Are you interested in a shared half bed , 4'x 4' , \$30 **yes / no**

Do you require or prefer an elevated ADA accessible garden bed, \$60? **Yes / No**

If you had a bed last year, what was the letter and number? _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____