

## GARDENING/PLANTING/LANDSCAPING POLICY

Gardening/Plantings/Landscaping on Billerica Housing Authority (BHA) property is for BHA residents who enjoy having flowers and watching them grow. This policy outlines requirements for a safe and clean-living environment for everyone. The beautification of BHA properties is appreciated. Prior written approval must be obtained from the BHA's Executive Director for any type of landscaping/gardening and/or flower/shrub planting. In seeking the approval from the BHA, the resident must provide a written request, fully detailing the proposed activity. All material costs for residents' plantings are the responsibility of the resident. Should someone other than the resident be doing the planting on behalf of the resident, it is the resident's responsibility to so obtain the BHA's prior written approval and to include the name of the individual providing the planting/landscaping and maintenance. Both the resident and the individual providing the gardening/planting or landscaping must sign the BHA approval form.

- Plants in containers/pots do not require the permission of the BHA. However, there is a limit of two containers/pots per household. Containers/pots cannot obstruct access or pose a safety hazard. Nor can containers/pots be placed in any common area. Plants in containers and pots do not require the advance approval of the BHA. However, there is a limit of two (2) containers/pots per household. Containers are limited to eight (8) inches in diameter and nine (9) inches in height. Styrofoam and contractor's buckets are not permitted. Additionally, there is a limit of two (2) planters per household. Planters are limited to eight (8) inches in height and twenty-four (24) inches in length. Planters may be hung securely on the porch railing. If not securely hung on a porch railing, then each planter counts as a pot/container. Nor can containers/pots/planters be placed in common areas or obstructing access.
- In-ground flowers/shrubs/gardening or landscaping may only be done with the prior written permission of the BHA and such activity is only allowed in BHA approved areas using pre-approved flowers/shrubs. Prior approved In-ground flowers/shrubs/gardening or landscaping cannot begin until April 1<sup>st</sup> each year. Plantings/Gardening in large BHA provided above ground planters are subject to this Policy and require the prior written request to the BHA and the written approval of the BHA.
- Residents who plant/garden must maintain their plants or garden. Such maintenance includes weeding, watering, removal of decaying plantings, etc.
- At the end of the season (no later than October 1<sup>st</sup>), the resident is responsible for the removal of any annual plants. All planting/gardening/landscaped areas must be returned to their original condition.
- Bricks/rocks/stones/mulch are not permitted

- Any planting or landscaping done without the prior written approval of the BHA will be removed by the BHA and disposed of. The resident will be charged for materials and labor with a labor rate of Fifty Dollars (\$50.00) per hour and with a minimum charge of Fifty Dollars (\$50.00).
- Residents are not allowed to trim or cut back any trees or shrubs on BHA property as that is the responsibility of the BHA. Residents can only trim, cut, remove, etc. items they have planted.
- Hoses, tools, and other gardening items cannot be stored on porches, in any BHA common areas, or left outside overnight. Such items must be stored in the resident's unit or offsite. Any items not properly stored will be removed by BHA maintenance and disposed of. The resident will be charged for materials and labor with a labor rate of Fifty Dollars (\$50.00) per hour and with a minimum charge of Fifty Dollars (\$50.00).
- Each household may have up to two (2) Shepherd's hooks with the prior written approval of the BHA. Shepherd's hooks may be used for plants only.
- The BHA does not permit feeders as seeds within feeders may fall. Fallen seed can attract other types of wildlife (such as bears, turkeys, squirrels, mice, etc. and predators such as foxes, coyotes, etc.). Additionally, bird baths, bird houses, etc. are not permitted.
- At the end of the season (no later than October 1<sup>st</sup> ) residents must remove, store, or dispose of all items.
- As most gardening/landscaping areas are shared areas, residents should be considerate of their neighbors and not infringe on others.
- All plantings/gardening/landscaping is done at the resident's own risk. The BHA takes no responsibility for damage or injury that may occur while mowing, trimming/edging, weeding, spraying, watering, mulching, etc. Also, the BHA takes no responsibility for damage or injury to others, or the property of the resident or others, from any resident plantings, pots, containers, planters or landscaping. Nor is the BHA responsible for any damage to gardens/plantings/landscaping caused by snow clearing/removal, deicing, etc.
- Failure to comply with this Policy may cause the BHA to remove and dispose of items and/or the BHA may withhold future approval for planting/gardening/landscaping or landscape maintenance.

- Once perennials, shrubs, etc. are planted, they become the property of the BHA. Removal of these items by residents is not permitted without the prior approval of the BHA.
- Pre-Approved structures/statues etc may be placed in a garden/planting or landscaped areas. However, each year, such items must be removed by October 1<sup>st</sup>.
- The interpretation and enforcement of this Policy rests with the BHA. It is agreed and understood approved planting/gardening/landscaping is conditional upon the resident's acceptance, in writing, of the terms of this Policy.
- Failure to comply with this Policy will be considered a Lease violation and may be subject to termination of a resident's Lease or denial of any BHA approval allowing gardening/planting/landscaping by the resident for his/her self or for others.

Approved by the Billerica Housing Authority Board of Commissioners on April 10, 2025