



## Floral and Ornamental Tribute Policy

Prepared	Approved	Date	Trust Minute No.
Manager Governance	Mildura Cemeteries Trust	September 2023	13/09/2023
Trim File: 12/09/01		To be reviewed: August 2027	
Document Owner: General Manager Corporate Performance		Review Frequency: 4 years	

### 1. The purpose of this policy is

To ensure that the cemeteries of Mildura Cemeteries Trust ('the Trust') are an attractive, clean, and tidy environment, free from potential hazards to all family and visitors, cemetery staff and the wider community.

To ensure a consistent approach to memorialisation that complies with the requirements of the Cemeteries & Crematoria Act 2003 (The Act) and the Cemeteries & Crematoria Regulations 2015 (The Regulations)

### 2. Policy Statement

The Mildura Cemeteries Trust is committed to ensuring a high standard of presentation is maintained at Nichols Point and Murray Pines Cemeteries. Adhering to the guidelines in this policy will assist the cemetery staff with our ongoing maintenance responsibilities and help to ensure that all families can visit their loved ones in a tidy and safe environment.

The Trust understands and supports the importance to individuals in placing tributes at burial and memorial sites with a range of memorial items for sentimental, cultural, or religious reasons; and is committed to ensuring that such memorialisation is respectful, inclusive, and safe for all.

### 3. Principles

All Right of Interments for burial, ashes and memorial only sites in cemeteries are held by the holder of the Right of Interment, and/or any other parties acting on their behalf, who have primary responsibility for any memorialisation that may be placed.

Memorialisation must not exceed beyond the boundary of the gravesite, out into the lawn areas or impede in any way upon neighbouring plots.

Any floral or ornamental tributes must not obscure the name(s) of the interred on the monument and should be confined to the concrete plinth or monument. Cemetery staff may remove floral and ornamental tributes that have withered or deteriorated as part of routine maintenance. Items that are broken or damaged may also be removed to ensure that the cemetery is maintained in a safe and tidy manner.

All care will be taken by cemetery staff when completing routine maintenance activities. If items require removal by staff to complete tasks, they will be replaced with care. However, no responsibility will be accepted for damage to items or for the accuracy in replacing such items in the exact location.

No memorialisation items are to be affixed to or hung from trees or memorial seats.

No fill (i.e.: bark chips, stones, mulch, fertilizer, compost etc.) is to be added – other than by cemetery staff.

A person must not dig or plant anything in the cemetery without the prior written approval of the Trust.

A person must not remove, pick, or damage any plant, flower, shrub, or tree in the cemetery without the written approval of the Trust.

Non-approved plaques or monuments are not permitted. There is an application process that must be completed for the establishment of monuments, headstones, and memorial seats.

For the period of 1<sup>st</sup> December to 7<sup>th</sup> January, festive decorations are allowable – provided they meet cemetery guidelines and are removed by 31<sup>st</sup> January. Cemetery staff may remove and dispose of any decorations that remain after this date.

#### Flowers and Flower Vases

While fresh floral tributes are encouraged, the Trust will permit both fresh and artificial flowers to be placed at a memorial site while they remain in good condition and provided tributes do not extend beyond the grave site.

As we move to focus on more environmentally sustainable cemeteries, the Trust will actively promote the placement of fresh floral tributes “only.”

Please remove wrapping and rubber bands from floral arrangements before they are placed in the vases, placing them in the bins provided.

- Cemetery provided plastic spiked vases (available at collection points throughout the cemeteries) can be used to place floral tributes at the front of the plinth or monument.
- Dead and stray flowers will be removed as required by cemetery staff during ongoing maintenance tasks.
- Artificial flowers will be removed when condition has deteriorated.

#### Ornaments in lawn areas and monumental areas.

Up to two granite or masonry flower containers may be affixed to the beam in a lawn grave area, provided they do not encroach on other graves or obstruct lawn mowing equipment.

Loose objects may be permitted if they do not pose a safety risk to the public or Cemetery staff, do not inhibit the maintenance of areas or encroach on other graves. Any items that pose a safety hazard are not permitted.

No fencing of any kind is permitted in lawn areas.

#### Ornaments in the Garden of Angels.

Loose objects may be permitted if they do not pose a safety risk to the public or Cemetery staff, do not inhibit the maintenance area or encroach on other graves. Any items to pose a safety hazard are not permitted.

Any items that have deteriorated (i.e., teddy bears, plastic ornaments) may be removed by staff undertaking maintenance tasks.

No fencing of any kind is permitted in the Garden of Angels

#### Restricted Items.

For environmental and safety reasons, we advise that the following items are not permitted without the written approval of the Trust.

- candles or open flames (unless in granite candle box – not lit on total fire ban days)
- breakable or fragile items including glass objects.
- decorative fencing (other than pre-existing, historic cast-iron fencing)
- alcohol or tobacco products
- perishable items
- metal spikes or any sharp items
- balloons
- tins or aluminum cans, or any item likely to rust or deteriorate.
- wind-chimes or other noise-making items
- items which may be considered offensive or derogatory.
- seating (other than memorial seating approved by the Trust)

Any items that may be considered offensive, derogatory or not in keeping with the cemetery aesthetics are not permitted and may be removed by Mildura Cemeteries Trust at its discretion.

A Trust representative will endeavor to contact the holder of the Right of Interment to advise of removal and will hold any (intact) items removed for a period of 18 months for retrieval. If not collected within that timeframe, the item(s) will be disposed of as per the MCT Confiscated Item process.

#### Theft or Damage.

The Trust

- Is unable to accept any responsibility for the theft of any item of memorialisation.
- Is unable to accept any responsibility for damage to any item of memorialisation unless it can be shown that such damage was caused by tasks carried out by cemetery staff.

- Will assist memorial owners in making claims for theft or damage under the Victorian Managed Insurance Authority Cemetery Trusts Insurance Program.

#### Management of litter and waste.

When visiting the cemetery, we ask for your assistance in removed withered or deteriorated floral and ornamental tributes and placing them in the bins provided.

These bins are to be used to ensure litter and waste do not create a safety hazard to visitors and native wildlife or detract from the aesthetics of the cemetery.

If a bin is not available, it is requested that rubbish is taken away. This will assist in maintaining the cemeteries in an attractive, clean, tidy and hazard free environment.

## **4. Legislation and other references**

### **4.1 Legislation**

For further information related to this policy see:

- Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 20023
- Cemeteries and Crematoria Regulations 2015

### **4.2 Documents**

This policy is implemented in conjunction with the following documents.

- MCT Monument policy
- MCT Mausoleum policy
- MCT Memorial seat policy
- MCT Confiscated items process.