



Department of Parks and Recreation GRAVE LABOR POLICY

101 Pauahi Street – Suite 6 Hilo, Hawaii 96720
Phone: 808-961-8311 Email: cemetery@hawaiicounty.gov

IMPORTANT: Any person providing their own grave labor will be directly responsible and liable for the proper coordination of the digging, covering and safety of everyone involved. The County will not be liable for any damages caused to property or person. If you have any doubt, please call a professional grave laborer, mortuary, or the P&R cemetery clerk at 808-961-8311.

1. **A Release of Claims form** must be signed by everyone participating, including minors. Contact the P&R cemetery clerk for more information.

2. **Assignment of Plot:** Only P&R Park Maintenance cemetery staff are authorized to assign plots. No one is allowed to dig in a location other than the assigned plots regardless of preference.

3. **Supplies Needed:**

A. **Safety:** If plot is opened prior to the burial date, these supplies are mandatory.

- Large ply-board or metal covering to cover the open plot.
- Caution or high-visibility ribbon with stakes to surround area.

B. (a) **Casket plots:**

- Dig 4 feet down for single-depth grave (1 casket per plot maximum)
- Dig 8 feet down for double-depth grave (2 caskets per plot maximum). Precautions must be taken in case of collapse.

(b) **For lowering casket:**

- Two 2X4 boards, 10 feet each. Place a board on each side of the open plot, lengthwise.
- Three 2X4 boards, at least 4 feet each. Place a board across the open plot, near the top and bottom.
- Two heavy duty straps to lower the casket. Ask mortuary for weight of casket/outer vault and choose straps of proper capacity. For single depth, use at least 20-foot length. For double depth, a 30-foot length.

(c) **For removal of two straps:** put two mounds of dirt, 6-8 inches high, before lowering the casket. Each mound should be placed two feet from each end of the plot.

C. **Urn burials:** Urn or outer vault must be covered by at least 18 inches of dirt.

4. **Care and respect:** Do not step on or sit on the other graves. Do not place any tools, supplies, drinks, etc. on other graves. Treat the other plots like they are your family's.

5. **Map your dig area:** Plots are immediately adjacent to the next plot vertically and horizontally. There is no space between plots. Survey pins identify each plot's corner. **DO NOT REMOVE** these pins. Park staff will spray-paint the location of each pin. Outline your dig area to equal your casket or outer vault's measurements plus 2 inches. Do not dig **more than 4 inches beyond its measurements**. Dig **well within** the plot and not at the border line. See illustration below:

6. **Clean up:** Take away all excess dirt. You may choose to leave excess dirt at the cemetery's designated dirt mound. All tools, temporary shelters, stakes, equipment, machinery, etc. must be removed after the burial. Do not leave equipment overnight. All decorations

