

Or Shalom Cemetery Policies and Procedures

January 27, 2025

This document describes policies that govern the operation and management of the Or Shalom Area in Mountain View Cemetery.

Definitions:

Dependent child: A dependent child is either a child under age 19 or an adult child who depends primarily on an OS member for financial support.

Full Burial Lot: Includes space for two caskets, one above the other, with a minimum 18-inch vertical separation.

Half Burial Lot: Half of a Full Burial Lot, with space for one casket. Those interred in a Half Lot will be placed in either the top or bottom portion of the Full Burial Lot.

Life partners: Legally married couples, as well as unmarried couples who have lived together in a marriage-like relationship for a period of two or more years.

Member in good standing: Or Shalom bylaws state that a member in good standing is an individual who has paid dues in the previous and current fiscal year and owes no other debt to Or Shalom or has made special arrangements with the Or Shalom treasurer.

MVC: Mountain View Cemetery

Or Shalom Auxiliary Chevra Kadisha (OSACK): The OSACK will provide services **only** to Or Shalom members for whom the Schara Tzedek Chevra Kadisha is unwilling to care. This includes, at this time, members of Or Shalom who are Jewish through patrilineal descent and transgender people that the STCK either will not serve or who are unwilling to receive services from the STCK. Members of Or Shalom for whom the STCK will care for will **not** be eligible for OSACK services.

OS: Or Shalom

OSA: Or Shalom Area of MVC

Right of Interment: The right to bury a person or their cremated remains in the OSA. (Purchasing a Right of Interment is the formal equivalent of “purchasing a burial lot”.)

Schara Tzedek Chevra Kadisha (STCK): The Schara Tzedek Chevra Kadisha is made up of men and women from Lower Mainland synagogues, including Or Shalom, who are tasked with preparing for burial any person defined as Jewish by Schara Tzedek. The Schara Tzedek Chevra Kadisha is managed by the Schara Tzedek Cemetery Board.

1. Agreement to establish the Or Shalom Area in the Mountain View Cemetery

The Reserved Area Agreement with the City of Vancouver stipulates:

- a. *“The City agrees to convert the Or Shalom Area for use for a maximum of 64 burial lots.*
- b. *Upon the conversion of the Or Shalom Area ..., the City agrees that all rights of interment in respect of all lots within the Or Shalom Area will be reserved exclusively for purchase by members of the Synagogue and that it will not sell any right of interment in respect of any lot within the Or Shalom Area to any person without the written approval of Or Shalom.”*

This agreement grants OS sole authority to approve the purchase of interment rights within the OSA of MVC.

The OSA is located at the south west corner of 33rd Avenue and Fraser Street, immediately inside the MVC entrance.

2. General Notes

The following policies govern the management of the OSA. In cases of conflict between OS policies and MVC policies or practices, OS policies will prevail for matters within OS's jurisdiction.

These policies are subject to change without notice. For the most current information, please consult the Chair of the OS Cemetery Committee by contacting the Or Shalom office.

OS recognizes that these policies may not address all potential situations. In such cases, issues will be referred to the OS Cemetery Committee for consideration.

3. Eligibility to Purchase

To purchase a right of interment in the OSA of MVC, the purchaser must:

- a. Be a member in good standing of OS at the time of purchase;
- b. Have been a member in good standing for a minimum of five years in total;
- c. Maintain good standing by remaining a member of OS after purchase of a right of interment. If membership has lapsed at the time of burial, a Non-Member Fee will apply (see 15. Non-Member Fee below).

4. Use of the Or Shalom Area

The OSA in MVC will be used exclusively for the burial of:

- a. Eligible OS members;
- b. Life partners of OS members regardless of membership status;
- c. Dependent children of OS members regardless of membership status;

Due to space limitations, OS's intent to be mindful of environmental concerns, and the desire to accommodate as many members as possible, **an individual will not be permitted to purchase a right of interment in a Full Burial Lot for their exclusive use.**

5. Burial Sections

To be as inclusive as possible, the OSA consists of two contiguous sections, one exclusively for Jewish burials (on the south) and one for multifaith burials (on the north). Non-Jewish OS members, non-Jewish life partners of Jewish members, and non-Jewish children of Jewish members must be buried in the multifaith section. Jewish members may also choose to be buried in this section. Separation of these sections will respect Jewish tradition.

6. Cremated Remains

Cremated remains will be buried in a separate designated section in the OSA. Cremated remains will not be interred in Full or Half Burial Lots within the OSA.

7. Purchase of Rights of Interment

Eligible members may purchase a right of interment in the OSA directly from MVC after:

- a. Acknowledging in writing their agreement with these OS Cemetery Policies;
- b. Obtaining written approval from the OS Cemetery Committee.

OS does not maintain or sell rights of interment. Financial arrangements must be made directly with MVC.

Eligible members may purchase rights of interment for themselves, their life partners, and dependent children. MVC requires the names of the individual or individuals to be buried to be registered at the time of purchase.

Steps to purchasing a right of interment:

- a. Purchaser contacts the OS office to express intent, and to confirm eligibility;
- b. Purchaser signs form confirming their agreement with these OS Cemetery Policies;
- c. OS Cemetery Committee issues eligibility form and sends it to the purchaser and MVC;

- d. Purchaser arranges with MVC to purchase a right of interment for a Full or Half Burial Lot.

8. Purchase of Full Burial Lots

Two related or unrelated eligible members may jointly purchase rights of interment for a Full Burial Lot for their joint use. The section and specific lot location are chosen at the time of purchase.

9. Purchase of Half Burial Lots

An eligible member may purchase a right of interment for a Half Burial Lot individually, that is without a designated second purchaser or second eligible member. In such a situation, the specific lot location is assigned by MVC at the time of death. MVC has full discretion to assign a second eligible member to the same Full Burial Lot without the first purchaser's consent.

An eligible member who has purchased a right of interment for a Half Burial Lot may later identify a second eligible member or life partner who wishes to purchase a Half Burial Lot. If the second purchaser is a life partner or dependent child of an OS member, they do not need to be an OS member. The specific lot location will be chosen at the time of the purchase of the second right of interment.

10. Transfer of Rights of Interment

Transfer or assignment of rights of interment to individuals other than the original purchasers is subject to OS policies and MVC guidelines.

11. Preparation for Burial

Jewish individuals will normally be prepared for burial by the Schara Tzedek Chevra Kadisha in accordance with Schara Tzedek standards and managed by the Schara Tzedek Cemetery Board. Jewish individuals not eligible for burial preparation by the Schara Tzedek Chevra Kadisha will be prepared by the recently-established Or Shalom Auxiliary Chevra Kadisha. Preparation fees are determined by and payable directly to the Schara Tzedek Cemetery Board for Schara Tzedek services, and to Or Shalom for Or Shalom Auxiliary Chevra Kadisha services.

Non-Jewish individuals will be prepared for burial by a suitable funeral home identified with the assistance of the OS Cemetery Committee or the OS rabbi. Non-Jewish individuals will not undergo the sacred Jewish ritual of tahara (ceremonial washing and purification of the deceased). However, preparation will conform to Jewish burial customs as closely as possible. For example, embalming will not be allowed, and the casket will remain closed during the funeral.

12. Burial

Individuals will be buried in a biodegradable casket (pine, reed, or cardboard) or shroud conforming to MVC guidelines and Jewish burial customs.

MVC is responsible for interment, marker placement, and maintenance. Burial fees and marker placement fees are determined by and payable directly to MVC. Maintenance fees are included in the purchase of a right of interment.

13. Funeral Services

Funeral services may be held at OS, the Schara Tzedek chapel in New Westminster, Celebration Hall at MVC, or the graveside. In the latter case, the funeral and burial service may be combined. All funerals, be they Jewish or non-Jewish, will be officiated by the OS rabbi, their designate, or a rabbi of the deceased's family's choosing, subject to the OS rabbi's approval. Non-Jewish clergy may attend but cannot officiate at a funeral in the OSA.

14. Grave Markers

In accordance with Jewish tradition of honouring the deceased, grave markers are required within the OSA. Standardized 20 x 16 x 3” polished lite grey granite markers, as approved by the OSA Cemetery Committee, will be used. Marker inscriptions will follow Jewish customs and receive approval from the Or Shalom rabbi. For non-Jewish burials, grave markers must comply with OSA policies and are prohibited from displaying non-Jewish religious symbols.

Effective June 2024, JB Newell Memorials is the designated grave marker supplier for the Or Shalom Cemetery. The cost of the grave marker is the responsibility of the deceased's family or estate.

An unveiling ceremony, the formal dedication of the grave marker, will usually be held within twelve months after the funeral. The purpose of this ceremony is to mark the final resting place of the deceased, to honour their life, and to serve as a focal point for people's memories.

The OS office and rabbi will work with the family regarding the wording for the marker, including the proper spelling of the Hebrew name, and with making the arrangements with JB Newell Memorials. The rabbi will also assist the family in planning and preparing an unveiling ceremony.

15. Non-Member Fee

A Non-Member Fee that covers OS administrative costs and clergy services will be applied at the time of burial for individuals whose membership has lapsed or who never held OS membership.

16. Cemetery and Burial Fees Summary

- a. Preparation fees are determined by and payable directly to the Schara Tzedek Cemetery Board for Schara Tzedek services and to Or Shalom for Or Shalom Auxiliary Chevra Kadisha services. Fees include documentation for the deceased, transportation, Jewish ritual, preparation and accommodation for the deceased, assistance at the graveside, and casket.
- b. Fees are determined by and payable to MVC for interment rights, full or half-depth interment, marker permit and installation, and surcharges, if applicable, for weekend burials and use of Celebration Hall.
- c. Grave marker fabrication and delivery fees are payable directly to JB Newell.
- d. A non-member fee, if applicable, is payable directly to Or Shalom to cover administrative costs and clergy services.

OS does not engage in financial transactions with the Schara Tzedek Cemetery Board, MVC, or grave marker suppliers.

17. Or Shalom (OS) Cemetery Committee

A permanent OS Cemetery Committee, appointed by the OS Board of Directors, will:

- a. Implement and maintain these policies and guidelines;
- b. Resolve conflicts arising from their interpretation and implementation;
- c. Determine eligibility and authorize MVC to sell interment rights;
- d. Have final authority to resolve disputes, in consultation with the OS Board of Directors.

The Or Shalom Auxiliary Chevra Kadisha will be managed by a subcommittee of the Or Shalom Cemetery Committee.

Approved by the Or Shalom Cemetery Committee - January 13, 2025

Approved by the Or Shalom Board of Directors - January 27, 2025