

# NIH Policy Manual

## 1450 - Policy for Accepting Donated Commemorative Trees

**Issuing Office:** OD/OM/ORFDO/DFS **Phone:** [\(240\) 479-0214](tel:2404790214)

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### Transmittal Notice

- 1. Explanation of Material Transmitted:** This chapter is being revised to comply with the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Manual 1710 requirement to update manual issuances every 5 years. Revisions also reflect name changes to the divisions and sections that have responsibilities associated with this chapter which establishes policy for the coordination and placement of donated commemorative trees on the NIH Bethesda enclave.
- 2. Filing Instructions:**

**Remove:** Manual Issuance 1450, dated 12/19/2012

**Insert:** Manual Issuance 1450, dated 12/07/2017

**PLEASE NOTE:** For information on:

- Content of this chapter, contact the issuing office listed above.
- NIH Manual System, contact the Division of Management Support, OMA on 301-496-4606, or enter this URL <https://oma.od.nih.gov/DMS/Pages/Manual-Chapters.aspx>

### A. Purpose

This chapter establishes the policy that will be used by the Office of Research Facilities Development and Operations (ORFDO) to coordinate and direct the placement of trees donated to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for planting on the NIH Bethesda enclave. These trees memorialize individuals or commemorate NIH Institutes that have contributed substantially to enhancing the health of the Nation or provided other significant assistance to further activities of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) or NIH.

### B. Scope

The objectives and responsibilities set forth in this policy are applicable to all NIH employees and provide direction to individuals or groups intending to donate memorial or commemorative trees for planting on the NIH Bethesda enclave.

## C. Background

The Division of Facilities Stewardship (DFS), ORFDO, periodically receives requests to plant donated trees on the NIH Bethesda enclave to recognize persons or Institutes significant to the development of HHS, NIH or their activities related to the prevention and treatment of disease and disability. This policy outlines the requirements and conditions under which such trees will be accepted.

## D. Policy

It is the NIH's policy to accept the donation of trees as: 1) memorials to deceased individuals who have contributed substantially to the health of the Nation or provided valuable assistance to further activities of HHS or NIH related to health, provided that requests are submitted and approved; and 2) commemoratives signifying an NIH institute, office or department milestone or achievement.

1. Donated trees memorializing an individual will be prioritized for the purpose of determining appropriate planting locations: *Highest priority* will be given to those individuals whose contribution to enhancing the Nation's health has been judged to be of historical or lasting significance to the United States, HHS, or NIH and whose work was performed at the NIH. *Second highest priority* will be given to those individuals who contributed substantially to enhancing the Nation's health through bio-medical research supported by NIH. *Third highest priority* will be given to individuals who have otherwise contributed substantially to the Nation's health as determined by the NIH. *Fourth highest priority* will be given to individuals within NIH institutes, offices or departments. The DFS Landscape Architect will prioritize donated trees using the criteria above and determine appropriate planting locations based on their priority level. The highest priority trees can be installed in more prominent campus locations than lower priority trees.
2. Commemorative trees signifying an NIH Institute, office or department milestone or achievement will be prioritized for the purpose of determining appropriate planting locations. Priority levels will be determined according to an organization's contributions to enhancing the Nation's health and whether they have been judged to be of historical or lasting significance to the United States, HHS, or NIH. The DFS Landscape Architect will prioritize donated trees using the criteria above and determine appropriate planting locations based on their priority level. The highest priority trees can be planted in more prominent campus locations than lower priority trees.
3. Tree donations are limited to small ornamental or shade trees between 2" caliper minimum and 4" caliper maximum. The costs for the tree and the installation are the responsibility of the donating party. A date and time for planting should be coordinated in advance with the DFS Landscape Architect. Tree installation should be scheduled during normal office hours, Monday through Friday. Trees must be staked, mulched, and watered immediately after planting. Deer protection should be installed on the tree trunks. Immediately after planting, all materials and tools used for tree planting shall be removed from the Bethesda enclave.

4. Memorial plaques will be allowed to acknowledge NIH organizational accomplishments and the efforts of deceased individuals who have contributed substantially to the health of the Nation or provided gifts in support of HHS or NIH activities related to health. Brass plaques not exceeding 6 1/2 x 8 1/2 or stone slabs (marble, limestone or granite) not exceeding 9" x 12" x 3" may be placed next to the tree within the mulched tree well. Brass plaques will be no higher than 12" off the ground at the base of the tree. Stone plaques will be placed level and be within the mulched tree well. The exact wording on the brass or stone plaque must be approved in advance by the Director, ORFDO. No statues, sculptures, benches, fountains or physical objects, other than those described in this paragraph, will be approved for personal or institutional memorials. NIH will not replace stolen plaques or repair damaged plaques.
5. Donated trees with memorial plaques will only be placed in designated areas on the Bethesda enclave. A map showing the locations of the designated areas may be requested from DFS by calling 240-479-0214. Donated trees without plaques may be placed in other locations on the Bethesda enclave, as approved by the DFS Landscape Architect.

## **E. Responsibilities**

1. The Delegated Authorities referenced in Section G. 1 and G.2 are able to accept donated trees and memorials respectively.
2. The Director, ORFDO, is responsible for approving requests to plant donated trees on the Bethesda enclave.
3. A DFS Landscape Architect is responsible for receiving requests for donations, determining appropriate planting locations, coordinating the review and approval process, and observing the installation of the tree.

## **F. Procedures**

1. Potential donors should contact DFS at 240-479-0214 and ask to speak with the designated Landscape Architect. The Landscape Architect will work with the potential donor to develop a tree donation proposal to be submitted for approval (See E.2).
2. As part of this process, the Landscape Architect will work with the donor to:
  - a. make field visits to determine the exact location or alternative locations for installation;
  - b. suggest plant species best suited to flourish and to harmonize with the surrounding landscape;
  - c. provide delivery and planting instructions; and
  - d. coordinate logistics through final installation.

3. Once the proposal is approved by the Director, ORFDO, the DFS Landscape Architect will notify the donor to make final arrangements for tree procurement and planting.

## G. References

1. NIH Delegations of Authority, Finance No. 05, 01/02/01, entitled "*Accept Gifts Under Section 231 of the PHS Act*" <https://delegations.nih.gov/DOADetails?id=1531>
2. NIH Delegations of Authority, Finance No. 06, dated 01/02/01, entitled "*Memorials and Other Acknowledgments*": <https://delegations.nih.gov/DOADetails?id=1532>
3. NIH Policy Manual, Chapter 1135 - Gifts Administration: <https://policymanual.nih.gov/1135>
4. Sections 231 and 240 of the Public Health Service (PHS) Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 238, 238i): <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/USCODE-2010-title42/pdf/USCODE-2010-title42-chap6A-subchapI.pdf>
5. Title 45 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Public Welfare, Subtitle A- Department of Health and Human Services, Part 3 Conduct of Persons and Traffic on the National Institutes of Health, Subpart A. General, Sec. 3.1 Definitions: <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title45-vol1/pdf/CFR-2011-title45-vol1.pdf>
6. NIH Policy Manual, Chapter 1743 - Keeping and Destroying Records: <https://policymanual.nih.gov/1743>

## H. Definitions

1. **Bethesda Enclave** - For the purposes of this policy, the Bethesda enclave, as described in [45 CFR 3.1](#), is limited to the legal boundaries of the NIH Bethesda campus in Bethesda, Maryland and does not include off-campus owned or leased sites.
2. **Commemorative Tree** - A tree donated to NIH by an individual or group for perpetuating in a lasting manner the memory of an individual of significant importance to HHS, NIH or their activities or for commemorating a significant achievement of an NIH Institute, office or department.
3. **Donated Tree** - A tree that is given to the NIH for planting on the Bethesda enclave and for which NIH did not bear the cost of purchase, delivery or planting.
4. **Landscape Architect** - A person with knowledge of landscape design, construction, land-use planning and environmental issues that support development of a landscape project.
5. **Caliper** - Tree trunk diameter as measured 12" above the root ball.

## I. Internal Controls

The purpose of this manual issuance is to establish the NIH policy and to describe the system for approving tree donation requests.

1. **Office Responsible for Reviewing Internal Controls Relative to this Chapter:**  
Division of Facilities Stewardship (DFS). Through this manual issuance, the DFS is responsible for the methods used to ensure that the internal controls are implemented and working.
2. **Frequency of Review:** Annual
3. **Method of Review:** The DFS will maintain oversight and ensure effective implementation and compliance with this policy through careful consideration of each donation request and feedback from individuals who made donation requests.
4. **Review Reports:** Review Reports shall be sent to The Director, ORFDO. Issues of concern will be brought immediately to the attention of the Director, ORFDO.

## **J. Records Retention and Disposal**

All records (e-mail and non-e-mail) pertaining to this chapter must be retained and disposed of under the authority of [NIH General Records Schedule, 1.1 Financial Management and Reporting Records](#).

NIH e-mail messages, including attachments that are created on NIH computer systems or transmitted over NIH networks that are evidence of the activities of the agency or have informational value are considered Federal records. These records must be maintained in accordance with current NIH Records Management guidelines. Contact your IC Records Liaison or the NIH Records Officer for additional information.

All e-mail messages are considered Government property and, if requested for a legitimate Government purpose, must be provided to the requester, employees' supervisor, and NIH staff conducting official reviews or investigations, and the Office of the Inspector General who may request access to or copies of the e-mail messages. E-mail messages must also be provided to Congressional oversight committees if requested and are subject to Freedom of Information Act requests. Back-up files are subject to the same information requests as original messages and documents.